

**Colonial Natures?
Wilderness and Culture
in Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site**

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Abstract

National parks in Canada have never only been about camping and wilderness preservation. Instead these parks are hubs of political, cultural, economic, and biophysical interaction that are subject to diverse national meanings. In Canada, national park status gives the state more power to ensure environmental standards than any other provincial or federal legislation. In examining the ways in which nature is a target of changing forms of governmental intervention, I look at how national parks in Canada continue to manage lands, people and the idea of nature. One of the core ideas that continues to shape national park projects is the explicit attempt to define a natural relationship between the nature contained within these places and Canadians. I argue that the creation of national parks involves the elaboration of a hegemonic governmental nationalism that is able to exercise powers of definition.

A postcolonial environmental analysis is used to examine the nineteen-year struggle leading up to the creation of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site on Haida Gwaii, British Columbia and its aftermath. The example of South Moresby is distinct in the history of both wilderness battles and of national parks in Canada because of the use of nationalist and sovereignist strategies to stop unsustainable exploitation of an ancient temperate rainforest. In particular, I explore the ways in which the Haida Nation's assertion of title throughout the struggle has inflected different aspects of Gwaii Haanas, including how its existence as a national park of two nations troubles conventional imaginings of national parks in Canada. The connections that I draw between nature, nation and colonialism on Haida Gwaii are the result of an interest in the ways in which colonialism continues to operate in and through state institutions and lands in Canada.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iii
Foreword	iv
Introduction	1
A Canadian Fable	
Gwaii Haanas/South Moresby: A Tale of Two Nations.....	2
Canada’s “Little Trophies”: Managing Nature and Canadian Identity in National Parks.....	8
Whose National Heritage? First Nations and Canada’s National Parks.....	18
Essay Outline	27
Method: “The Doing of Research in the Midst of Politics, Ethics, and Emotions”	29
 Chapter One: A Political History of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site	 34
Haida Gwaii in Brief: 8000 B.C. – 1974.....	35
Classifying Natures: 1974-1988	44
Industry and Logging Critiques.....	51
The Lyell Island Blockade.....	54
South Moresby National Park	60
Co-Management in Gwaii Haanas: 1988-1993.....	69
 Chapter Two: Managing Nature and Culture in Gwaii Haanas.....	 75
The Terrestrial Management Plan	77
Co-Management and Colonial Erasure	79
Marketing Nature (Wilderness)	82
Commodifying Culture (Indigeneity)	89
A (Post)Colonial Text?	93
 Conclusion:	
Forgetting a History, Selling a Park	100
 Bibliography	 106

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Foreword

This major research paper is a culmination of my studies in a Master in Environmental Studies degree at York University. It represents a synthesis of the components of my Plan of Study, which is entitled “Discourses of Development and Nature.” These components are Development Discourses and Discourses of Nature.

My time in the MES program has been focused on the ways in which truths are constituted. An important component of this focus is to explore how we come to think about things in the ways that we do. Discursive analyses of various texts and practices have allowed me to interrogate how dominant discourses of nature and development are valorised, reproduced and importantly, disrupted. The discursive focus of my Plan of Study has enabled me to use my coursework and my major paper to investigate and question inherited concepts and to confront theory with the world it tries to explain.

This major paper is an attempt to apply the theoretical tools I have acquired through the coursework of my programme to a specific realm: national parks in Canada. The connections that I draw in my major paper among nature, culture, and parks as regulating institutions are the result of an interest in the ways in which colonialism continues to operate in and through state institutions, the media, and lands in Canada. Colonialism is ubiquitous in many of our modes of seeing and being in the world. A synthesis of the components of my Plan of Study and my major paper has allowed me to recognise the ways in which my own endeavours as a student of environmental studies and as an activist are situated within these particular legacies of power.

Introduction

A Canadian Fable

While he was carving the *Spirit of Haida Gwaii* for the Canadian Embassy in Washington in early 1987, Bill Reid was quoted on page A6 of the *Vancouver Sun* as saying: "I am not prepared to enhance your international reputation when you treat my people badly." The statue is a giant aged-bronze canoe carrying the spirits and stories of the Haida, a First Nation people living on Canada's northwest coast. Reid was protesting the British Columbia government's recent approval of a five-year logging plan for Lyell Island, a tiny island in the Haida's homeland of the Queen Charlotte archipelago that had been the site of intense debate between the provincial and federal governments, the logging and forestry industries, environmentalists, and the Haida Nation for the past thirteen years. Two days later on April 10, 1987, Reid defended his withdrawal from the project on page 52 of the *Western Report* saying, "people in the embassy will be saying 'our Indians did this.' I don't see myself as one of their Indians." Reid later noted in his biography, "I couldn't live with it anymore, using Haida symbols to advertise a government – and I mean all levels of government, provincial as well as federal – that we felt was not cooperating with us in

what I consider to be very minimal, legitimate requests” (in Shadbolt 1998, 103).¹

Reid resumed carving of the *Spirit of Haida Gwaii* in July 1987 when the governments of Canada and British Columbia signed an agreement to stop logging on Lyell Island by establishing a national park in the southern third of the Queen Charlotte Islands. The sculpture was finally completed and installed in 1991. On one hand, *Spirit of Haida Gwaii* inserts a Haida presence into the vortex of Western power in Washington. On the other hand, the sculpture is used by the patron that commissioned it - the Canadian government - to represent Canada’s embrace of democracy and multiculturalism, a complex and problematic stance. In this instance, as in many others, Canada uses aboriginal sensibilities to express Canadian identity to the world, a practice that masks the government’s internal policies toward Aboriginal Peoples, including ones that tried to stamp out all displays and practices of traditional native cultures.

Gwaii Haanas/South Moresby: A Tale of Two Nations

Since 1974, the South Moresby area (*Gwaii Haanas*) of Haida Gwaii, a small archipelago in British Columbia 640 kilometres north of Vancouver and 130

¹ Bill Reid’s position as speaker is interesting, not least because he struggled with his relationship to the Haida community throughout his public life. Born to a Scottish father and a Haida mother, Reid was troubled by his identification by the popular press as a “Haida artist”, and referred to the Haida people in most of his interviews and writings as “them”,

kilometres west of the mainland, has been an intense site of competing ideas of land use, ecology, and aboriginal title.² Beginning as a dispute between interests supporting rapid, large-scale clear cut logging versus those advocating preservation, the “South Moresby struggle”, as it was popularly known between 1974 and 1987, extended beyond the classic North American wilderness debate that polarised economic and aesthetic arguments over land use. Against a backdrop of unresolved questions of sovereignty and land and resource ownership, the South Moresby example is distinct in the history of both wilderness protests and of national parks in Canada because of the use of sovereignist strategies to stop unsustainable exploitation of a temperate rainforest.

The subsequent destruction of traditional resources of the Haida is one reason that non-renewable extractive operations, particularly clear-cut logging of old-growth forests, have been contentious throughout the region. In 1985, after unsuccessful bids to both the provincial and federal Supreme Courts to gain control of its lands, the Haida Nation unilaterally designated the South Moresby area a Haida Heritage Site under the sovereignty of its hereditary chiefs and subject to the Haida Constitution in order to pressure the provincial government to halt proposed logging plans and to raise

rarely “I” or “we”. Despite this reticence the Haida often used Reid strategically as a symbolic spokesperson and at times, it seemed, as a character witness.

awareness about the significance of the archipelago for the Haida (*Haada Laas* 1992, 8). When British Columbia ceded its management responsibility of South Moresby to the Canadian government in 1987 so that the area could be designated a national park, the Haida, the original inhabitants of Haida Gwaii for the past ten thousand years, were not asked to participate in the negotiations. The movement for Aboriginal land and resource appropriation had simply briefly intersected with global concerns over conservation of primary forest and biological resources on Haida Gwaii.

During the next several years, a new, somewhat quieter, but no less complex phase of the conflict was to ensue. At its heart was the question of sovereignty: although national park status meant that South Moresby was finally protected from industrial logging, the question of who – the Haida Nation or the federal government – had ultimate jurisdiction over the area remained highly contentious. The primary difference in land management objectives was jurisdictional: at the time a “national park” protected lands for tourists, while a “Haida Heritage Site” saw protection of South Moresby for the continuation of Haida culture (*Haada Laas*, January 1985). From the time it signed the memorandum in 1988 but had not yet negotiated a deal with the Haida, the federal government attempted to subsume Haida concerns under the rubric of economic diversification and global wilderness

² “Haida Gwaii” is a more appropriate name than “Queen Charlotte Islands” and is increasingly used, although those who resist aboriginal title tend to use the English

conservation. The Council of the Haida Nation, (CHN), the Haida's governmental body, instead insisted on a joint stewardship accord structured around Haida sovereignty in the form of co-management. The CHN and the Canadian federal government finally forged a basis for joint management of South Moresby National Park in January 1993 through the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, when the two nations agreed that park management in Gwaii Haanas, unlike in other national parks in Canada, would emphasise ecological and cultural protection above the development of tourism infrastructure and other economic opportunities (Management Plan, N.D.). The park became a park reserve (signalling that its establishment does not compromise the Haida's struggle for title) and was renamed Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site.

The Agreement is an attempt to solve the problem of competing land claims over the same territory, and recognises both parties' views on ownership and jurisdiction as the basis for working together to protect and manage Gwaii Haanas. Whereas Canada relies upon the National Parks Act and legislation specific to Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, the Haida Nation relies upon its claim of Aboriginal rights in its ancestral territory and is guided by the Constitution of the Haida Nation. Two very different views of ownership, nature, and the land itself operate alongside one another in the Agreement.

Today, Gwaii Haanas is uniquely co-operatively managed by Parks Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation. As one of only seven co-management agreements reached for a national protected area in Canada, the Gwaii Haanas Agreement has been widely lauded as the most innovative and far-reaching of its kind (Hawkes 1996, Weitzner and Manseau 2001, Doberstein and Devin 2004, Parks Canada N.D.).³ Indeed, in many ways Gwaii Haanas provides a positive view of one possible future for Canadian parks: provision is made for the use of park lands, flora and other natural elements by the Haida for spiritual and cultural purposes, thus opening up new ways of negotiating of human-nature relations in parks; park management is in one sense *democratised* both by integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with the state's science-based management model endemic to national park management and by blending self-management and centralised management regimes; and the federal government's willingness to recognise and work with different views of land ownership symbolises a changed mode

³ The six others are Nahanni in the Northwest Territories, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve on Vancouver Island, Kluane in Yukon, Vuntut in Yukon, Auyuittuq in the Northwest Territories, and Wapusk in Manitoba. Little has been written about the innovative decision making regime that governs Gwaii Haanas' management. The uniqueness of the Agreement stems from its *de facto* power sharing arrangement. Unlike other co-management agreements with First Nations, the Agreement does not assign final decision-making power to the federal government; rather, the relationship between the Council of the Haida Nation and the Canadian governments (BC and federal) is left deliberately vague. Consensus decisions are made by the bilateral Archipelago Management Board (AMB), which is comprised of two representatives each of the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation. Decisions are non-binding; they are sent as recommendations to the Government of Canada and the Haida Nation. However, the Gwaii Haanas Agreement is insufficient to justify any transfer of authority to the AMB from the statutory designate of the park (the Superintendent); that is, Parks Canada has ultimate authority over whether Gwaii Haanas will accept the AMB's decision or not, although this veto has not yet been invoked in Gwaii Haanas' history.

of land expropriation (a dark chapter in the agency's history) in establishing national parks.

Beyond the utopia of its public appearance, however, lies a more conflicted locality. At its root is the question of how *two* nations can constitute a *national* park. In this essay, I use a postcolonial environmental lens to look at how the particular tension in this overlap is reflected both in the political history of the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site and its management. In exploring the particularities of co-management in cobbling together two overlapping national designations and fundamentally different views of ownership and custodianship, I argue that a national park in Gwaii Haanas is used as a means to insert national ideas into the Haida Nation's territories as part of Parks Canada's ongoing cultural struggle for the representation of Canada. Rather than challenging the fundamental goals and assumptions of a postcolonial industrial society as it purports to do, I argue that Gwaii Haanas' current representational and management practices actually facilitate global capitalism and colonial assumptions about the relationship between wilderness and civilisation.

In so doing, I seek to contribute an environmental and cultural studies perspective to the growing body of geography, history, and political ecology literature that examines nature within the postcolonial terrain, and where

colonial ways of seeing and being in the world remain endemic to governmental techniques under the rubrics of sustainable development and nature preservation. My hope is that activists and students of environmental studies will consider how our own endeavours are situated within this particular mode of power.

This essay thus begins with the notion that national parks in Canada are hubs of political, cultural and economic, in addition to biophysical, interaction. A brief review of the history of national parks as read through postcolonial environmental thought establishes the theoretical context for my argument in the chapters that follow.

***Canada's "Little Trophies"⁴:
Managing Nature and Canadian Identity in National Parks***

Over the last thirty-five years or so governments across the Western world have been trying to manage the manifold social, political and economic forces at work in the area of environment. From drinking water guidelines to reforestation policies, our relationship with nature in all of its possible manifestations has been densely subject to government intervention and management. In Canada, national park status gives the federal government more power to ensure environmental standards than any other provincial or

⁴ In an informal conversation with the author a member of Gwaii Haanas' Archipelago Management Board remarked that "Canada holds up their [sic] protected areas like they're little trophies."

federal legislation (Bella 1987, 156). My argument is rooted in the notion that the federal government's monopoly on the claim to expertise both in managing the Canadian environment and in mediating a particular kind of experience with the natural world is a claim to power, and one that merits careful scrutiny.

At its simplest definition, a national park is land that is held in trust by the federal government for the people of Canada and, in recent park and nature preservation rhetorics, for the world.⁵ The National Parks Act defines a national park as "an area which has been identified as a *natural area of significance*, which has been acquired by Canada and designated by Parliament as a national park, and over which Parks Canada has been given administration and control under the authority of the *National Parks Act*" (NPA Schedule 1, emphasis added). As I discuss presently, different and often opposing articulations of nature by national park texts have meant that nature is a site of struggle and negotiation among the human and nonhuman actors involved.⁶

⁵The introduction to Parks Canada's *National Parks System Plan* (1997) states, "our system of national parks and national historic sites is one of the nation's – indeed the world's – greatest national treasures" (NPSP 1997, 1).

⁶ Selection of potential park areas in Canada is guided by internationally established criteria for national parks. The IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas defines "natural" as "ecosystems where since the industrial revolution (1750) human impact has (a) been no greater than that of any other native species, and (b) has not affected the ecosystem's structure" (www.parksCanada.gc.ca). Importantly, this definition of natural underestimates the impacts of nonindustrial societies both before and after 1750 and their past and present role in creating, maintaining, and degrading ecosystems (see Wright 2004). More significant, however, is that such language establishes a profound barrier to recognition and support of *changing* forms of settlement and subsistence of First Nations

Canada became the first country to have a government department given solely to the administration of national parks in 1911. In the agency's 1914 Annual Report, the first Commissioner of the Dominion Parks Branch, James Bernard Harkin, outlined the four roles of parks as: bringing economic benefits from tourism; providing public recreation grounds; preserving natural beauties and wildlife; and promoting pride in the Canadian landscape (Apostle 1997, 28). Throughout his career with the Parks Branch (one that spanned nearly three decades), Harkin was intent on establishing an overarching *system* of national parks and seemed little troubled by the contradiction inherent in a place that purported to preserve nature from the humanity that was invited to visit and enjoy it. Indeed, since the creation of the first national park in Banff in 1885, park establishment has largely been justified by its contribution to local economic capital through tourism (Bella 1987, MacEachern 2001, Wilson 1991). As the results of the report of the 2000 Panel on Ecological Integrity demonstrate, this tension continues to characterise - and erode - Parks Canada's mandate.⁷

communities that continue to reside within the boundaries many national parks and protected areas. As Doberstein and Devin note, management by indigenous peoples has rarely been considered part of the natural disturbance regime inherent in ecological systems because most science-based management paradigms view humans as separate from nature (Doberstein and Devin 2004).

⁷ During 1999 and 2000, the federally appointed Panel on Ecological Integrity visited the national parks across Canada with the goal of assessing their ecological well-being. The EI Panel's report was released in the Spring and concluded that "ecological integrity in Canada's national parks is under threat from many sources and for many reasons" (Parks Canada, March 23, 2000). The report notes that the ecological integrity of many of the parks is in part impinged from within their borders by recreational infrastructure (including

Operating parks as engines of local economic growth has meant that their main attraction – nature – has been closely tied to the political economy of tourism, and as such has been constituted and thus commodified in ways that make people want to visit the parks. In one sense then, the origins of national parks are really about the facilitation of a particular nature aesthetic. Yet commodifying nature in national parks is less a matter of figuring out what counts as nature than of negotiating different *modes of appropriation of nature* that appeal to potential visitors; indeed, as commodities themselves, national parks are faced with the difficult task of having to produce nature as an independent and “wild” spectacle and at the same time having to differentiate between natures so that people will want to visit all of the different parks.⁸

The particular version of Nature that has always been commodified in the national parks is one that positions it as an historical agent, a rendition that lends historical authenticity to Canada’s presence by grounding the young nation firmly in its national territory. One of the agency’s recent slogans reads: “Parks Canada: Connecting the Land, the Water, the Past and the People.” In his seminal articulation of nations as “imagined communities”,

roads and other services) and by, particularly in the more accessible parks in Southern Canada, the sheer number of visitors.

⁸ While nature has figured prominently in leisure activities since the mid-1800s (the parks and playground movements in large cities and the rise of outdoor organisations are two early

Benedict Anderson describes how modern nations create a sense of legitimacy “by stretching the imagination of a national past into a deeper history of immemorial origins” (Anderson, 1983, 12). By claiming to embody the prehistoric essence of Canada through places in which “nature is allowed to evolve in its own way, as it has done since the dawn of time” (NPSP, 2), national parks are “sites in which the (projected) moment of national origin can be viewed, consumed, repeated and extended into an increasingly unified story” (Sandilands in review, 9). The myth of Canadian nature as an authentic origin for the nation has been so pervasive that until the 1970s, it acted as a legitimating concept that allowed the expansion of the park system to override any critics who might have questioned the ethics of throwing people off the land and redefining their living space.⁹

It is thus important to point to a particular Canadian nationalist discourse that is present in the confluence of changing articulations between nature and its commodification through capitalism in national parks policy. One of the core ideas that continues to shape national park campaigns is the explicit attempt to define a natural relationship between the nature contained within parks and Canadians. For example, as part of a series on environmental

examples), Wilson notes that the rise of the automobile industry during the 1940s and 1950s encouraged people to see nature as a visible commodity (Wilson 1991, 19-27).

⁹ Park expropriation routinely occurred until the 1970s. One example is the creation of Gatineau Regional Park in the National Capital Region in 1927, during which as many as 30 families were removed from the land (Apostle 1997, 47). As with reserve making during the colonial era, the national park *system*, as a “set of landscapes” has enabled the

citizenship and education, Parks Canada published a poster called *Discovering the Nature of Canada* that reads: “as Canadians, ‘Nature’ is part of our nature. It influences our culture, our history and our identity...Our natural and cultural heritage shapes the Nature of Canada.” Beginning with Banff in 1885, the equation of the national parks with Canada’s “original and pristine condition” has meant that the parks - and the Nature that is immaculately preserved within them – have come to represent embodiments of the nation. Importantly, by inserting the territory into an explicitly *national* history, national parks displace other narratives, times, places, and meanings (Sandilands, in review).¹⁰ I return to this theme of erasure presently; for now, it is important to note that national park spaces are organised by their insertion *both* into a national discourse and into relations of international capital through tourism (Sandilands 2000, 3).

As markers of Canada’s physical and imagined historical claim to the continent, national parks depend on particular representations of nature that act to support this claim. Texts and photographs in Parks Canada’s publications, in addition to the interpretive signage that is spattered throughout many of the parks, tend to very actively construct nature in its “purest” form: primordial, undisturbed, unchanging, and emptied of human

establishment of parks to be mapped according to Canada’s topography in order to legitimise how particular physical spaces are appropriated.

history. For example, nearly every one of the thirty-nine park landscapes featured in the agency's *National Parks System Plan* are described by one of "pristine", "empty", "unbroken", "untouched" or "silent."¹¹ Not only does the image of an *empty* wilderness legitimise the federal government's claim to the national territory and history, but, by emptying them of their human history the parks become unmarked spaces on which the nation can be inscribed without reference to Britain, to aboriginal peoples, or to the United States – all of which have been conventional points of anxiety in Canada's quest for identity (Sandilands in review; see also Braun 2002 and Mackey 2002).¹² She notes of parks created before 1914, "far from preserving some kind of space in which this nature could proceed without interference, the early parks actively created a particular kind of *empty* nature space in

¹⁰ Examples include the masking of second-growth spruce forest in Prince Albert National Park as "ancient forest", and the exclusion from park texts of histories of resource and mineral extraction in national parks, as in Gwaii Haanas and Banff.

¹¹ Stemming from this particular representation of nature as a timeless place of wild beauty is the colonial notion of a "discovered" landscape. Indeed, the idea of being the first to see these lands is an important marketing technique used by the national parks. For example, potential visitors are enticed to participate in the colonial ritual of discovery on Gwaii Haanas' website, "With the coming of summer, visitors from all over the world begin to arrive. Each one of them shares the sensation of being the first person to set foot here" (MP, 7). As Sandilands notes, "the imperial trope of discovery is predicated on the idea that the landscape achieves meaning only when it can be placed clearly in the imaginary of the dominating coloniser" (Sandilands in review, 4). Invitations such as that on Gwaii Haanas' website are intended for white visitors.

¹² Until relatively recently in the parks' history, the landscape was very much "touched", as resource and mineral extraction were common within park boundaries. Furthermore, the "wild nature" in parks has always included a variety of people, beginning with tourists. Over 21 million people visited the parks between 2004 and 2005 alone (Parks Canada Attendance: 2002-2001, 2004-2005).

which all eyes could be directed to the sublime edge of the white, civilised world" (Sandilands in review, 8).¹³

Braun suggests that when a landscape is re-staged and re-positioned to look empty of people, culture, and livelihood, it "becomes an unmarked, abstract category emptied of other claims – a pure space that exists only as a ground and raw material for the self-creation and rational management of the nation-state" (Willems-Braun 1997, 10). It is significant to note that such landscapes are imagined; they are sites of cultural production and do not exist outside of thought or discourse. Park landscapes have thus been founded on the "production of colonial space", by which is meant the division of the territory into two distinct *orders* of space: one "traditional" and "primitive", delineated and contained within the "reserve", and the other "modern", encompassing everything that lays outside the bounds of the reserve (Willems-Braun 1996, 112).

In addition to nature, these "primitive" spaces also include certain "traditional" humans that are positioned as symbolising nature in the parks.

¹³ The constitution (and expectation on the part of the visitor) of what nature should look like has meant that park managers are often mandated to manipulate the landscape to approximate this particular wilderness aesthetic. Parks Canada's "active management approach" involves strategies that "maintain or restore key ecological processes that reflect their natural condition"; for example prescribed burning, the introduction of native species where they are absent, and the removal of invasive species (such as the infamous spruce beetle eradication campaign in the late 1990s in Prince Albert National Park). By authorising itself to "adjust ecological processes to occur at rates that are natural for the region" the

An example comes from the recent poster I discussed earlier in this section called *Discovering the Nature of Canada* published by Parks Canada. In it, one sidebar titled “Learning from history” details how “during the last 400 years, Canada’s nature changed forever: a distinctive community of the Aboriginal peoples, the Beothuks of Newfoundland, plus 9 species of animals and 2 species of plants became distinct...We don’t know how these extinct species might have contributed to useful bio-medical knowledge.” The inclusion of “Aboriginal peoples” in a list of non-human elements of the landscape is one example of the ways in which park projects can absorb First Nations *into* nature, and in the process cast First Nations as part of the “natural” beginnings of the nation. Mackey argues that in racist stereotypes First Nations often represent the early foundations of Canada, symbolising nature itself (Mackey 2002, 37). Indeed, many have argued that national parks “preserve” nature with much the same cultural intent that put First Nations peoples in reserves in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: as testaments to man’s origins, and his “original state” of a bygone era (Wilson 1991, MacEachern 2001, Sandlos 2002). As Willems-Braun notes, this fusion “gives the impression of simply ‘inserting’ native people into, and as part of, a preexisting natural landscape” (Willems-Braun 1997, 21). It is important to pay close attention to this traditional/modern dualism: First Nations peoples, as long as they remain within the bounds of traditional,

federal government positions itself as the true “expert”; claiming to know even better than nature itself what is good and bad for its health (www.parkscanada.gc.ca).

have historically been represented by park texts as nature, an absorption, Braun argues, that renders them invisible.

For the urban visitor, this modern/traditional dualism in parks has meant that these places are constituted as sanctuaries of spiritual renewal. For example, the introductory description of “Our National Parks” on Parks Canada’s homepage reads: “Each [national park] provides a haven, not only for plants and animals, but also for the human spirit. A place to wander...to wonder...to discover yourself.” A visit to the national parks thus allows one to “de-modernise” or “de-civilise” through a return to a nature that is pre-modern and “allowed to evolve in its own way, as it has done since the dawn of time.” The Canadian Nature in parks appropriates both the purely visual and iconographic emblems of national nature (such as wilderness, mountains, evergreen forests etc.) as well as the more ephemeral effects of spiritual health.¹⁴

In sum, nature as found in the national parks is translated by the state into an essential characteristic of Canadian identity, a starting-point for national narratives, and a tourist commodity. It is significant to point out that our

¹⁴ Both Joe Hermer (2002) and Catriona Sandilands (2000, 2004) have explored the different ways in which park regulations *create* the experience of park going insofar as the state instructs visitors how to behave and what to see in particular landscapes through signs, maps and brochures. As Hermer notes, “parks depend on careful ordering of humanity and nature in order to create a desired experience of freedom and individual communion with the wild” (35). In this sense, national parks can be considered governing institutions

own often unquestioned Canadian settler culture, infused with the legacy of particular colonial modes of seeing and being in the natural world, plays a privileged role both in the ways in which natures in national parks are constituted and in our experience of them as visitors. As Wilson reminds us, “we cannot see parks as natural without understanding that it is our culture that has made them so and declares them so” (Wilson 1991, 217). It is thus important to pay careful attention to the particular colonialist cultural projects that remain endemic to Canada’s national parks, including assumptions about the relationship between wilderness and civilisation.

Whose National Heritage? First Nations and Canada’s National Parks

Since the 1960s, Parks Canada has been forced to adapt the existing aesthetic of its economistic policies to changing circumstances (MacEachern 2001, 5). A heightened public awareness and anxiety over dwindling habitat and preserved natural spaces has caused the agency to attempt to shift public attention away from a policy that used parks as local economic development strategies and instead focus on the more noble responsibility of nature preservation and wildlife management.¹⁵ When Parks Canada

that not only manage nature to the highest national standard, but also attempt to mediate a *particular kind of experience* with the natural world.

¹⁵ Interestingly, despite this shift away from parks as engines of local economic growth, when the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney cut \$30-million from Parks Canada’s budget in the mid-1980s it insisted that the parks be run as businesses, including introducing user fees and contracting out park services (such as interpretive services in remote parks) to private companies. The cut in funding also meant that parks were forced to turn to more aggressive marketing strategies in order to attract tourists (Sandilands in review, 22).

assumed management of the land in South Moresby in 1987, the agency had historically been more concerned with providing services for tourism, and had only recently begun to emphasise management of natural habitat and protection of biological resources. By 1988, the National Parks Act had been amended to put preservation first in Parks Canada's tripartite mandate of preservation, education, and recreation.

Sandilands notes that "as ideas of nature have shifted in articulation with discourses and practices of tourism, economic development, wildlife management and cultural heritage...the parks have been subject to a variety of different 'nature' agendas, of which ecological integrity is the most recent" (Sandilands 2003, 2). The release of the report of the Panel on Ecological Integrity on the state of the parks in the Spring of 2000 sparked the federal government's most aggressive action plan yet that focused on the preservation of the nature in the parks, and one that aimed at "mak[ing] ecological integrity our clear priority" (http://www.pc.gc.ca/docs/pc/rpts/ie-ei/report-rapport_2_e.asp). Several of the EI Panel's recommendations were legislated through an amendment to the National Parks Act in 2001, including one that advised Parks Canada to begin a healing process with First Nations. The Report had stated that "building partnerships" with Aboriginal communities was an important step toward restoring the ecological integrity of the parks. To this end, the federal government announced in its EI action

plan: “we will work to improve relationships and cooperative activities with Aboriginal people, particularly at the local level; continue to respect existing Aboriginal and treaty rights; and find new ways to work with Aboriginal people toward common goals of conservation, education and economic development” (http://www.pc.gc.ca/docs/pc/rpts/ie-ei/report-rapport_2_e.asp).

The action plan marked a distinct shift in how Parks Canada approached its relationships with First Nations communities that had been affected by park establishment. Many national parks in Canada were created during a time when the federal government acknowledged neither the rights nor the ecological knowledge of Aboriginal Peoples. As a result, First Nations whose lands have been encroached upon (if not completely engulfed) by national park designation have historically been excluded from national park governance and lands. One of the changes that was made to the National Park Act in 2001 in response to the recommendations of the EI Panel was an explicit statement that Aboriginal organisations and bodies established under land claim agreements *must be consulted* on the establishment of wilderness areas in lands where land ownership is unresolved. As well, whereas the former Act provided for traditional renewable resource harvesting by First Nations in only two parks (Pukaskwa in Ontario and Wood Buffalo in Alberta), the new Act broadens such access to all national parks where the

use of flora and other natural objects by Aboriginal people for spiritual and traditional ceremonial purposes have been made a condition of settlement of an Aboriginal land claim.

Historically, First Nations have tended to see Canada's national parks as at best an abstract European construct far removed from their own cultures' holistic views of land and place (see, for example, footnote 4) or, at worst, just another way of constraining Aboriginal and treaty rights and expropriating lands (Honouring the Promise 2003, 6).¹⁶ While in the past processes for establishing and defining Aboriginal and treaty rights have been distinct from those used to establish protected areas, these two processes have often been integrated in more recent land-claim agreements.¹⁷ Although First Nations have been most successful in gaining involvement in protected areas through activism based on treaty claims or land-claims negotiations, many bands have had their lands expropriated in

¹⁶ An example that demonstrates this second position is Pacific Rim National Park Reserve on Vancouver Island. While there is currently no legal requirement that Parks Canada work co-operatively with the bands that comprise the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation, the First Nations Program Manager at Pacific Rim has been charged with creating a "post-treaty environment." This means that when a treaty has been reached between the federal government and the Nuu-chah-nulth, a co-operative management board will provide the opportunity for the bands to *participate* in the management of the Park, but does not allow for complete self-management by the bands.

¹⁷ The strongest legal protection that can be given to a park in Canada is inclusion in treaty and land claim settlements with First Nations. Because treaties enjoy constitutional protection, and because changing the *Constitution Act* is a daunting task, parks included in these agreements are difficult to reduce or eliminate. Most of the settlement agreements with northern Aboriginal Peoples provide for national and territorial parks. For example, the Inuit land claim agreement confirms the establishment of Auyutitq, Sirmilik, and Quttinirpaaq National Parks. Vuntut, Ivvavik, and Tombstone Parks were protected under the Yukon umbrella final agreement (Boyd 2003, 175-177).

the service of national park establishment *prior to* modern day treaty arrangements. These communities are usually denied access to undertake traditional activities within park boundaries, and have little opportunity to influence how protected areas impact them (*Honouring the Promise* 2003, 49-53).

Parks Canada has been more willing to adopt some form of co-management than have other national resource management agencies (such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Forests) (Doberstein and Devin, 2004). As early as 1979, nearly a decade before the formal adoption in the federal government's land-claims policies, Parks Canada had proposed the concept of the sharing of power and responsibility between the government and local First Nations resource users each time a new national park was created following a land claims settlement.¹⁸ Early forms of federal-First Nations partnerships in national protected areas were weak, with final decision-making authority resting with the federal government (the Indigenous Advisory Committee established in Auyuittuq National Park Reserve in 1983, for example). A national park *reserve* under Canada's National Park Act establishes national park status for all purposes except for ones that would compromise Aboriginal land claims. Formal co-management regimes allowing for greater First Nations participation developed in the

1990s, and by 2002, 13 national parks and national park reserves out of a total of 39 had co-management structures of some type (Parks Canada 2002).

In addition to participating in co-management regimes, First Nations have been increasingly integrated into the national park system in other ways; namely, as tourist attractions. For example, of the twelve national parks and national park reserves that are featured in Parks Canada's 2005 *Vacation Planner: The National Parks and National Historic Sites of Canada in British Columbia and Alberta*, half feature various examples of Aboriginal culture in the "Why You Will Love It!" sections. As with nature, the potential for economic growth has tended to influence the character of and prevalence with which Aboriginal cultures are represented in Canada's national parks and in our experience of them as visitors. Importantly, these representations have frequently been subject to colonial assumptions about the relationship between wilderness and civilisation.

Indeed, by the agencies' own admission, a weakness in both national parks and National Historic Sites in Canada has been their tendency to locate Aboriginal cultures solely within the arts, crafts, housing, costumes, forms of transportation or cuisine, rather than in economic, political, and social

¹⁸ Although it was not centrally concerned with questions related to parks in Canada, the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry or "Berger Inquiry" in the mid-1970s, was a milestone in

institutions (*Towards the Past*, 15). A 1995 report for Canadian Heritage and Parks Canada titled *Towards a New Past: A Report on the Current Presentation of Aboriginal History by Parks Canada* assessed the national parks' displays and publications (or lack thereof) on First Nations' histories. The report concluded that these histories were either largely absent or inaccurate in many of the parks (one display in a park in Newfoundland had been telling visitors that the Vikings were the first humans to see North America), and advised Parks Canada to "show leadership" in "creat[ing] a sense of community, of belonging" such that "all Canadians may recognise themselves in the total image of their country" (3, emphasis in original). Reflecting this new awareness, a section of the agency's website titled "Aboriginal World Views" compares aboriginal cultural landscapes with those of the Western tradition, and celebrates its movement away from its former practises of commemorating Aboriginal histories through the perspective of art history and archaeology and towards seeing cultural landscapes as associated with "living peoples" in the 1990s.

The increase in both the recognition of First Nations in park texts and in the prevalence of co-management regimes in Canada's national parks stems in part from the federal government's growing sensitivity to the rise of Native sovereignty – a sensitivity that has been nurtured by international recognition and pressure to do so. For example, in 1994, the International Union for the

identifying the link between indigenous issues and national parks (CPAWS 2001).

Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas recommended that the rights of indigenous be recognised in all six of the IUCN's management categories. Parks Canada's move from the Minister of Environment to the Ministry of Canadian Heritage under Chrétien's Liberals in the early 1990s also marked a shift in emphasis within the agency's mandate to include both cultural and biological preservation within national parks.

I argue that increased First Nations presence and participation in Parks Canada's representational and management practices is also rooted in the *domestication* of First Nations' sovereignty and interests in managing their lands. Returning to the 1995 report to Parks Canada titled *Towards a New Past* as an example, the report recommended that Aboriginal Peoples must be able to "recognise themselves" in the image of Canada that the parks project. The report opens by stating that: "One of the pre-eminent challenges before Parks Canada is to find ways in which the Aboriginal peoples of the land can recognise themselves in the picture the agency projects of the country. That such recognition must take place is literally and symbolically important. Reduced to its simplest form, the impetus to re-focus the image that is projected as *our* national image – so as to make sure that it includes Aboriginal stories and voices – inevitably broadens who we Canadians mean by *we*" (6, emphasis in original). This national tenor is also highlighted in *An*

Approach to Aboriginal Landscapes, which notes that Parks Canada “has come only gradually...to consider how effectively the values of Aboriginal peoples in relation to their history can define national historic significance and identify places that embody that significance” (http://www.pc.gc.ca/docs/r/pca-acl/sec3/sec3a_e.asp).

In her analysis of the construction of Canadian national identity, Eva Mackey points to “the paradox of shifting back-and-forth between the erasure and the appropriation of Native people and culture, in the service of nation-building and identity construction” (Mackey 1991, 23). In Canada’s national parks, First Nations peoples have occupied a range of positions: as invisible in “empty wildernesses”, as tourist commodities in the parks’ “cultural landscapes”, and as co-custodians of parks that are co-managed. In each of these, the federal government continues to decide when and how First Nations are involved in the national parks. While these latter modes of tolerance both increase recognition and attempt to respect First Nations’ traditions and agency, they are pseudo-postcolonial insofar as the state continues to act as though it possesses a monopoly on legitimation.

Like nature, then, First Nations have been subject to different agendas in national parks. Yet, as I hope to demonstrate in this paper, in the context of Gwaii Haanas the Haida Nation continues to confront its absorption into the

nationalist discourses promoted by that park. There has thus never just been one singular doctrine directing the national parks system. The history of park creation and policy in Canada is instead one of an ongoing contest between the values and meanings of nature, preservation, development, profit, and most recently, First Nations. National parks and the tourist economy that has emerged with them remain bound to the aesthetics, visual consumption, possession and regulation of national landscapes. Parks Canada's more recent projects of both "ecological integrity" and co-management with First Nations serve to uphold the agency's attempt to maintain a continuous narrative of pride in the Canadian landscape and national identity as a country that cares for its environment and its Aboriginal peoples. In the pages that follow, I explore what the confluence of the particular historic, political, economic and scientific origins of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site in British Columbia – and the absence of others - reveals about the forces at work on this particular landscape.

Essay Outline

This essay rests on a theoretically informed reading of the various documents that create and uphold the dominant national parks discourse, including parks legislation and regulations, staff handbooks, pamphlets, promotional material, maps, and signs. Archival newspapers, television footage, and radio interviews are also used to assemble the timeline of the

South Moresby struggle. Many of these materials are part of Gwaii Haanas' archival collection on Haida Gwaii and were accessed by the author in May and June 2006.¹⁹ The raw materials for the research in this paper are thus artefacts that in various ways narrate events, actions, and decisions. Each of these texts offers a particular angle on these events and decisions to a particular public.

In the first chapter, I look at the nineteen-year battle over the South Moresby wilderness that culminated in the creation of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site in 1993. I focus on specific conjunctures that best illustrate the complex economy of rights and claims that were at work on Haida Gwaii during this time, and that allow me to explore how certain interests were positioned as legitimate and rational by different actors and discourses. In the second chapter, I look at how particular elements of the struggle culminate in an official park text: Gwaii Haanas' current *Management Plan for the Terrestrial Area*. How, in other words, is the struggle visible in the Gwaii Haanas of today? In that chapter I also look at how the Management Plan, as a state document, serves specifically to commodify the landscape. Throughout the essay I ask the reader to consider

¹⁹ While Parks Canada's archives are generally held in the agency's office in Ottawa, Gwaii Haanas' co-management agreement dictates that these be held onsite in the park's office in Queen Charlotte City on Haida Gwaii. Investigators wanting to do research in national parks must first apply for a research permit through the Parks Canada website. These applications are typically reviewed by Parks Canada staff in Ottawa, but permits that pertain to Gwaii Haanas are reviewed and approved by the park reserve/heritage site's Archipelago Management Board.

how the story of Gwaii Haanas calls on different stories of nature and culture, and how in turn recalling its history helps us to examine a publicly available myth: that of Canadianness.

The value of the genealogical approach undertaken in this essay is that it allows me to foreground the particularities and messiness of Gwaii Haanas' relatively recent history and in so doing, undermines readings of national parks in Canada as spaces of unmarked and unmarred nature. By putting into question these conventional readings, I hold Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site and, more broadly, Canada's national parks accountable to the colonialist and capitalist spaces within which they operate and indeed perpetuate. In turn, I open up space for a critique of the relationship between First Nations and Canadian settler society and of the projects of national parks.

Method:

***"The Doing of Research in the Midst of Politics, Ethics, and Emotions"*²⁰**

With the tourist season still a few weeks away, and the sinking of the *Queen of the North* in February 2006, the ride up to Haida Gwaii was a quiet one. It was early May when I travelled on the *Queen of Prince Rupert*, the ferry that twisted and turned northward along BC's rugged west coast to Skidegate Landing on Haida Gwaii. Most of the journey was at night, but when it was

²⁰ Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands. June 2006. Personal Communication.

light enough to see I spent much of the time on the outer deck. Mountains grew out of the water on both sides of the ship, the tops of some plunging into swollen, sullen clouds. From every crevice and every dip, trees sprouted at wild angles. I felt a surge of national pride: Canada was so *beautiful*. But whose land did I think I was looking at? More than 95 per cent of land in British Columbia is claimed by the 57 First Nations bands that call this province home (<http://www.bctreaty.net>).

Recently moved to Vancouver Island after living in downtown Toronto for most of my life, I had been told that two months on Haida Gwaii was an exceptional introduction to the West Coast. Less than fifteen hundred people visit this part of the world every year, and fewer embark on the twenty-six hour ferry ride (plus a ten hour bus ride up Vancouver Island from Victoria to Port Hardy) along the rocky shores of the Inside Passage, opting instead for the quick plane ride from Vancouver (Parks Canada 2002).

On Haida Gwaii, I had rented a small cabin just outside of Queen Charlotte City, the “business hub” of the archipelago. I spent much of my time sifting through the archives at the offices of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site and the islands’ weekly newspaper, *The Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, both in Queen Charlotte City. There is a dearth of material on what has come to be known as the “South Moresby struggle”,

and while many of these resources are available off-island, being physically present helped me (if paradoxically) to begin to situate the story in a broader context. I immediately discovered that South Moresby, and the events on Lyell Island in 1985 in particular, are still fresh in the minds of many of the local residents. I talked with a number of people during my visit and not one seemed thrilled that a national park had been established on the islands. It is as though everyone had different expectations for a national park in South Moresby and none of these have been met.

When I first went into the park office to look through the archives in early May I met Barbara Wilson, who has been the cultural resource manager at Gwaii Haanas for the past ten years. The Haida are among the most studied people in the world, and every year a number of researchers from all over the world come to stay and study the villages. I am aware of my legacy as a white researcher, but Barbara let me read between the lines and said nothing of anthropologists', sociologists', historians' etc. forays into these islands and communities over the past one hundred years. Instead she said that the Haida allow researchers to enter their communities because "we have nothing to lose, and everything to gain." Indeed, the Haida are well known for their alliances with powerful, or at least visible, groups and individuals, particularly in advance of and often in aid of their title case with the

government of Canada.²¹ While national and international publicity is a way of garnering support, I questioned whether a “Major Research Paper” would be at all useful for the Haida.

Barbara talked about the history of the Haida’s encounter with the Europeans, smallpox, the reserve system, residential schools and finally the blockade on Lyell Island in 1985. She wasn’t actually at the blockade herself, having only recently returned to Skidegate from off-island, but her mother spent much of this time preparing food for the protesters with many other women in the community. Most of the stories Barbara shared with me I had read or seen in various books and articles and in television footage. But it wasn’t until I listened to her speaking that day did I actually begin to *feel* these histories -- an awareness that I had not yet experienced in my academic life.

²¹ These include the David Suzuki Foundation, the Sierra Club of Canada, and prominent Canadians like John Ralston Saul and the late Bill Reid. In recent years, researchers have begun to focus their projects on aspects of Haida Gwaii’s people and history that support the Haida Nation’s title case. One example is Nancy J. Turner, who I met while in Skidegate in May 2006. Dr. Turner is a distinguished professor at the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria and one of the most respected ethnobotanists in the world. Her work on traditional Haida plants and uses will be used as evidence of the Haida Nation’s 10,000 year occupation of Haida Gwaii in its Supreme Court Case for title. I also met another researcher from the Forest Sciences Centre at the University of British Columbia who is reviewing aerial photographs taken by the Armed Forces during the 1930s in order to determine how tree growth patterns have shifted over the last several decades. The distinctive markings of Culturally Modified Trees (CMTs) are visible in some of these photographs, and her research will be presented in the Haida case as evidence of pre-contact occupation and forest management capabilities.

I revisited the purpose of my visit to Haida Gwaii: What exactly was I hoping to do and “get” by coming to this remote place? I had thought about interviewing some of the Haida women who were still alive and who had been at the barricade. Although my analysis is based on publicly available documents and so I did not intend to incorporate quotes from these discussions into my paper, I had thought that the interviews would supplement my understanding of the period, especially given that Haida voices are largely absent from these texts. But I recognised that this part of Gwaii Haanas is not my story to tell. Barbara told me that the blockade at Lyell Island was a difficult period for many of the Haida people who were involved and who are still trying to heal, and is not a subject that is talked about lightly, especially with a stranger. What kind of rapport could I possibly build in the short two months I was here? I did not want to pretend to “include” a range of others’ voices on their own terms when in fact these would have been generated through the interview process. Finally, given that my paper is a discursive analysis and one that does not ultimately prescribe a model or typology, how would my research give back to the Haida community after I had come in and stirred things up? My paper could be used a tool for reflection, particularly of how the political history is connected to the extant park, but I do not believe that it is appropriate for me to bring about this reflection.

I cannot erase the legacy of colonialism in writing about the Haida people (who are one of many actors in the story of Gwaii Haanas); I can, in pointing to some of the particularities of the mode of developing nationhood and personhood *against* colonialism (for example, the fact that people like Barbara Wilson are willing to work within the co-management regime), attempt to bring my “feeling” of these histories to the pages that follow. Indeed, the fundamental challenge of this essay is that we should learn general things about Canada and its national parks, but also about the nature of colonialism. And yet the specificities of the story of Gwaii Haanas and of my positioning in telling it ensure that the relevance of concepts such as colonialism takes unexpected twists and turns. The tension between the politicised reading of history that follows and my own experience of Haida Gwaii and position as a middle-class and European-born writer is an invitation to trouble the ostensible stability of the text.

Chapter One:

A Political History of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site

In the Introduction, I looked at the history of national parks in Canada through a postcolonial environmental lens to show how these places facilitate both a particular mode of global capitalism and colonial assumptions about the relationship between wilderness and civilisation as part of an ongoing struggle for the representation of Canada. In this chapter, I examine these tensions through an eco-cultural reading of the political history of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site from 1974 to 1993. I look at various government documents and briefs, transcripts of House of Commons debates, NGO pamphlets and other NGO publications, newspapers, newsreels and magazines to see how collectively these texts operated to tell particular stories about nature and the nation on Haida Gwaii. As I noted in the introduction, the value of the genealogical approach is that brings to the fore the particularities and messiness of Gwaii Haanas' relatively recent history and in so doing, undermines readings of national parks in Canada as spaces of unmarked and unmarred nature.

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section I briefly recount the history of resource management and of the forestry industry in BC during and beyond the colonial regime. The second section looks at the events in South Moresby beginning in 1974, when the BC government first renewed

Rayonier Inc.'s Tree Farm License for South Moresby, through the Haida's pivotal blockade of a logging road on Lyell Island, to the 1987 signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the federal and provincial governments that resulted in the establishment of South Moresby National Park. I focus on the invocation of South Moresby as a primeval and unique wilderness as articulated by the primary environmental group of the struggle, the provincial and federal governments, and the media. I also argue that by equating the survival of their traditional culture and community with environmental protection, the Haida were able to articulate their demands to a public that was already sympathetic to the environmental claims being made to South Moresby without compromising their own claims to nationhood. In the third section I discuss the provincial and federal agreement that led to the formation of South Moresby National Park in 1987 and how the state's land designation of a national park in Haida territory was rationalised. The final section of the chapter looks at the interim years leading up to the signing of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement between the federal government and the Council of the Haida Nation in 1993.

Haida Gwaii in Brief: 8000 B.C.-1974

This story has many beginnings and it is difficult to choose which are to be privileged and which are to be excluded from the timeline that follows. In writing about Mohawk nationhood and the conflict at Oka, Québec in the

late 1980s, Amelia Kalent points out that “the politics of time frames and beginnings is a central element in an interpretation of events” (Kalent 2004, 16). Indeed, competing origins and timelines introduce different players, causes, and responsibilities for actions.

This story begins at least 10,000 years ago, when, according to the Haida, the first humans emerged from a clamshell at Naikun (Rose Spit) on the northeast coast of the Haida Gwaii archipelago. Traditional Haida society had a fishing-gathering economy, a hereditary status system and sedentary villages (Ingram 1995, 78). Clans and their lineages and the village formed the basis for economic relations, where matrilineal title regulated the patterns of land and marine tenure.

Trading between Europeans and the Haida began in earnest in 1787, nearly fifteen years after the first known encounter when a British captain sailed into the islands and named them after his ship, the *Queen Charlotte*. For half a century the Haida and the Europeans bartered sea otter pelts (and collaborated in their extirpation), art and stone carvings for iron tools and other goods. The Haida never signed any treaties, nor did they surrender in any war. The British Crown’s declaration of ownership of the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1846 was thus based on the colonial belief that property

rights followed from discovery and particular (read: European) forms of occupation.

During two years in the 1860s nearly ninety percent of the Haida population was killed by a series of smallpox epidemics that had first been brought to the islands by an infected European sailor left to die on the shore. A vaccine was in Victoria but First Nations who had paddled to Vancouver Island from up and down the coast were denied access to it (Barb Wilson, May 2006. Personal Communication). Survivors on Haida Gwaii abandoned the villages in the southern islands (Gwaii Haanas) and fled north to Skidegate and Old Masset, which today are the two major living Haida communities on the islands. Now, as then, Canada and British Columbia see Haida land as confined to these two reserves as institutionalised by the Indian Act, and the rest of the islands as Crown land held in trust for the Queen by the province.

When British Columbia joined Canada in 1871, First Nations living in the province became a Dominion responsibility, while land and resources fell under provincial jurisdiction. Since the beginning of the colonial regime in BC, Crown governments have tended to view First Nations' assertions of sovereignty as competitive threats, particularly with regard to control of wealth from natural resources extraction (Harris 2002, Ingram 1995). An early response to the Natives' persistent declaration of ownership during the

making of the reserve system was to centralise resource management, which acted to serve colonial interests by giving the colonial government tremendous economic and political power by undermining indigenous authority. Given that neither forest reserves nor timber leases were granted to First Nations by the provincial government, land policies further alienated these groups from resource and land decisions by ensuring that they would participate in industrial forestry as wage labourers rather than as owners or managers (Harris 2002, 117, 307). The overarching provincial position was thus one that held access to wage labour and economic self-sufficiency above access to land; especially to land that was of little or no agricultural value (117). This cultural model continues to operate today, with land decisions generally made based on economic value rather than cultural significance of the land.

In BC, provincial and federal governments have largely been unwilling to decolonise resource management, insofar as renewable resources continue to be centrally managed and corporate integration of the means of production has meant that workers and provincial residents (including First Nations) are excluded from decision making (Ingram 1995, 73). Recognising First Nation sovereignty and ownership would mean that Crown governments would be held financially accountable to resource extraction companies that would have to be compensated for the subsequent

termination of their leases. Legal challenges around aboriginal title are a key factor pushing government policy towards shared decision-making. In *Delgamuukw v. R* [1997], the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed that aboriginal title was never extinguished in BC. More recently, Canada's Supreme Court affirmed in *Haida Nation v. British Columbia and Weyerhaeuser* [2004] that the Crown has a duty to consult and accommodate First Nations regarding land use decisions, even before title or rights are proven.

For the past one hundred and fifty years the lands and waters that have sustained Haida culture and life for millennia have also fuelled a rapidly expanding provincial economy. Despite repeated Haida assertions of sovereignty and traditional tenure in provincial and federal courts, the colonial and subsequent BC provincial and Canadian federal governments have denied these rights and instead managed the land and its wealth according to non-native priorities, namely capital accumulation through large-scale logging, fishing, and mining (particularly nickel and some gold mining in the early twentieth century). Industrial resource exploitation has emptied the islands and surrounding waters of much of their minerals and precious and semi-precious metals, and heavy commercial logging and fishing have caused a rapid decline in the natural capital of forests and surrounding ocean over the last several decades. The history of this country is one in which both

federal and provincial governments have managed the short-term interests of settler society at the expense of First Nations and the ecological integrity of the land and resources. Ecological degradation on Haida Gwaii is rooted in ongoing colonial relations towards both the land and the Haida. In this sense, then, the “South Moresby struggle” was a struggle in the long history of colonialism.

White settlers trickled onto the Haida Gwaii archipelago throughout the nineteenth century, lured by government pamphlets that told of lush and fertile landscapes that were rich in mineral deposits, excellent timber, and arable land (Friends of Masset Library, 1979).²² The BC government introduced a timber license system in the mid-1880s, at which time 94 per cent of the forests in the province were owned by the Crown (May 1998, 285). When the province institutionalised the Tree Farm License (TFL) in the 1940s, large integrated companies (i.e., companies controlling many phases of production, manufacturing, and sales) were encouraged to invest in the forest industry, in part to insulate local communities from the boom and bust cycles of the forest sector. These licenses continue to involve extensive and direct control by private logging interests over large areas of public forest. Economies of scale have meant that timber cutting has shifted from hand logging in small areas to increasingly large blocks of clear-cuts (Ingram 1995,

79). On Haida Gwaii, as in other parts of the province, the BC government granted monopoly control over the forests to interests that had the means to remove valuable resources quickly (Ingram 1995). The underlying dynamics of this type of “express” logging led to a crisis in site planning, with large areas having been logged without adequate consideration of non-timber values of the land (Ingram 1995, 80, Report of the Pearse Commission). The result was that by the 1970s, the logging industry was forced to log less accessible lands such as islands and steep grade forests such as those up and down the BC coastline and on the Haida Gwaii archipelago.

Not wanting to engage in the federal government’s call for equal citizenship²³, during the 1970s and 1980s many Aboriginal leaders instead spoke of the inherent sovereignty of their communities and the need for a nation-to-nation relationship. The Haida had been attempting to assert their legitimacy as a nation for decades, and their claim to stop logging on South Moresby was always couched in their claim to nationhood.²⁴ In speaking of

²² The Queen Charlottes are not in fact suitable for farming given that much of the supposedly “arable” land is swamp. The government simply wanted to justify settlement by populating the islands.

²³ In 1969 the Liberal cabinet attempted to repeal the Indian Act, based on the idea that the integration of Aboriginal communities into mainstream Canadian society and institutions would end social and economic impoverishment on reserves. Critics and First Nations alike argued that Trudeau’s White Paper was an attempt to reinstate assimilation policies.

²⁴ Two recent Haida “nation” campaigns are the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program and the Haida response to the Land and Sea Convention. As part of an ongoing effort to reclaim its position as principal sovereign in Gwaii Haanas, the Haida Nation developed a protection and conservation service in the early 1970s called the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program. The program began with several parties of one or two volunteers who travelled to Haida village sites in South Moresby using their own boats where they would camp for the summer season. These volunteers acted as guardians of sites that were subject to vandalism or other

the logging in South Moresby a Haida woman told the *Vancouver Sun* on November 9, 1985 that “It’s a terrible thing...*to see a nation die*, to see rivers die” (emphasis added). Beginning in the early 1970s, the Haida’s efforts towards nationhood were largely vetted through their government, the Council of the Haida Nation. Established in 1980 under the Societies Act, the CHN is authorised to, among other things, coin money, and “regulate commerce with Foreign Nations and among domestic communities” (Constitution of the Haida Nation). Decisions within the CHN are made primarily through consensus. Responsibilities include to “establishing land and resource policies consistent with nature’s ability to produce that will be applicable to all users of the homeland.” The “Haida Proclamation” asserts that “the Haida Nation is the rightful heir to Haida Gwaii.”

In 1958, the same year that an amendment to the BC Forest Act changed the standard license terms from in perpetuity to a fixed term of 21 years, the first TFL on Haida Gwaii (No. 24) was granted to the U.S.-owned Rayonier Inc., at the time a subsidiary of the world’s largest multinational corporation,

disturbances linked to increased visitations (such as Ninstints). The program continues to play an important role in educating visitors about the natural and cultural heritage of Gwaii Haanas, (although the Watchmen are now paid by Parks Canada); indeed, the Haida Watchmen remain the only visible management presence within Gwaii Haanas. Through its involvement in conservation planning and management through the Watchmen Program, the Haida Nation establishes itself as a major force challenging the legitimacy and value of provincial land stewardship. In 1981, when the Haida formally registered the hereditary boundaries of Haida Gwaii with the United Nations, it objected to the Law of Sea Convention which allowed Canada a 200-mile jurisdiction that conflicted with Haida territories. At the time, a Haida spokesperson stated that the Haida would refuse to accept that anything about their assertion of title was a ‘claim’, saying instead that “It is Canada which claims Haida land” (*Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, November 22, 1982).

I.T.T., to log Moresby Island in the southern half of the archipelago. While the South Moresby area was not slated for cutting for another 20 years, logging operations continued elsewhere on the archipelago and by the 1960s much of the northern part of Moresby Island and the southern and central areas of Graham Island had been logged.

Although oral histories and historical documents reveal an ongoing struggle by the Haida to retain and reclaim their rights and title to Haida Gwaii, the Haida's demands for protection of subsistence and cultural resources were first articulated formally and publicly in 1974. The initial term of TFL No.24 had been awarded in 1958 without fanfare, but when the time came to renew the license and Rayonier Inc. submitted a five-year logging plan for Burnaby and Lyell Islands in South Moresby, the Council of the Haida Nation lodged a formal complaint against the provincial government. The Haida feared that traditional food sources would be threatened by logging in this area and demanded to be involved in decisions about how their land was to be used.

At a feast thrown by the Haida in Skidegate in 1974, then-BC Premier W.A.C Bennett responded to the complaint by making a verbal promise that Haida Gwaii would see a moratorium on logging. The Haida took this to mean that the logging license would not be renewed. Rayonier Inc. did not

acknowledge this moratorium publicly, but stated that, for economic reasons, it had decided to log in a more northerly region of the archipelago. The Haida interpreted the Premier's breach of his promise to halt logging in the region as a breach of trust, and responded by taking the province to court on the basis of hereditary title. By 1979 the Supreme Courts both of British Columbia and Canada had dismissed the legal challenge on the grounds that the Haida's hereditary title to the Queen Charlotte Islands did not exist (Pinkerton 1983; May 1990; Ingram 1995).

Classifying Natures: 1974-1988

The Islands Protection Society (IPS) was formed in early 1974 by two young male activists residing on Haida Gwaii, one a Haida resident and the other an American draft dodger who had been living on the islands for a few years. The non-profit organisation was formed in response to the proposed renewal of TFL No.24 with the intent to organise Haida and non-Haida residents of Haida Gwaii who were "dedicated to preserving the human and natural environment of the Queen Charlotte Islands" (*All Alone Stone*, Winter 1980). The IPS's first act of political organising was to submit to the BC Legislature a petition that had been signed by 500 residents of Haida Gwaii calling for an immediate moratorium on all logging in the South Moresby area until an environmental impact assessment could be done.

The petition was accompanied by the Southern Moresby Wilderness Proposal (SMWP), a passionately written document that focused on the need for wildlife protection through multiple use management in the lower third of the archipelago.²⁵ Such management, the proposal alleged, would allow the area to be administered as one single unit (as opposed to the patchwork of lands comprised by the various TFLs that were in place) and would “protect this area in a near natural state and provide high quality wilderness recreation” in accordance with “recreational and aesthetic values” (IPS 1974). South Moresby was touted as “one of the last vestiges of our wilderness” and “a unique opportunity to preserve a microcosm of the Pacific West Coast unspoiled for future generations” (Ibid). Despite acknowledgement that significant research and wildlife population counts still needed to be conducted in the area, the proposal detailed how some of the world’s largest concentrations of bald eagles, Peale’s peregrine falcons, seabird nesting sites, ancient murrelets, as well as a number of species of whales and many endangered species of both plants and animals were present in the South Moresby area.

²⁵ “Multiple use management” is a management arrangement that is typically practised in class A provincial parks, and, until 1995, allowed for commercial logging, mining and hydro electric development. In later IPS texts this type of management was vehemently opposed. For example, the IPS’s submission to the South Moresby Planning Team on November 20, 1979 read “multiple use management...would not only forever compromise the intrinsic values of the area, but would be a sell-out of what today is a unique national heritage” (*Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, December 3, 1979).

In the mid-1970s, the BC forest industry was positioned as being so lucrative that even a national park could not prevent the ensuing downturn in the economy if the pace and scale of logging were tempered. Then-BC Forests Minister Tom Waterland was quoted in an article that appeared in the *Vancouver Sun* on March 23, 1975 as saying that the province could “no longer afford to set aside huge tracts of land solely for park or wilderness areas” and that “the reservation of huge tracts of land for parks and wilderness areas [is] an absolutely unnecessary luxury.” The same article stated that in the previous year forestry products had accounted for 58 per cent of all exports in BC, produced \$83-million in direct revenue and supported 76,000 jobs. In a brief to the South Moresby Planning Team in November 1977, the owner of Beban Logging, the logging company working in the South Moresby area, at the time scoffed at the idea of preservation as “leaving us only aesthetics and damn little else.” In the same document the SMWP proposal is described as showing a “total lack of economic reality.” It was in this political climate that the SMWP was tabled indefinitely, and, despite public hearings and the appearance of a number of Haida and non-Haida petitioners who argued against logging in South Moresby before the BC Supreme Court, the provincial government approved Rayonier's five-year logging plan and renewed TFL No.24 in the Spring of 1979.

As I discussed earlier in this chapter, one of the things that both the province and the forest industry feared in “sparing” South Moresby from clear-cut logging was that it would set a dangerous precedent for the establishment of other single-use areas, something that both the province and industry argued would lead to a loss in jobs and revenue in the province. Importantly, the BC government’s decision to renew Rayonier’s TFL reflects its short-term equation of well being with economic growth. An account of *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer* reveals that by the late 1970s, local debate on Haida Gwaii had increasingly focused on the activities of the logging industry on the Islands. In response, the logging industry began directly addressing its critics. For example, in early December 1982, Rayonier printed a full-page ad in the *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer* detailing the company’s 12-point position. It read: “The ‘illusion of wilderness’ concept being promoted by some is a commendable proposal in itself”, it read, “but it would impose such a cost upon society as to make its imposition prohibitive. We are therefore opposed to it...the aesthetic cost imposed by logging is minor and acceptable.”

From its inception, the IPS²⁶ unwaveringly adhered to a logic of saving a primeval nature in order to stop logging. Beginning with the SMWP, and

²⁶ More than 500 environmental organisations from across the world involved themselves in the South Moresby struggle, including the Western Canada Wilderness Committee and the Canadian Nature Federation. The IPS was the primary local environmental organisation and coordinated many of the broader campaigns and actions. For the most part these groups

through each of its subsequent campaigns, the IPS grounded its support for “saving South Moresby” in a specific discourse of environmental protection in which nature preservation is tied to the desire for a particular wilderness aesthetic (in this case, of primeval forests). In this discourse, nature is valued according to the proximity to which it approaches what an ideal primeval and thus *natural* wilderness looks like. As I discussed in the Introduction, the idea of wilderness as a place that is void of humans and any imprint of modernity is commonly held to be a European construction that initially emerged during the late eighteenth century in response to industrialisation and urbanisation (Williams 1980; Cronon 1995; Braun 2002; Birch 1990). Importantly, such conceptions of wilderness are contingent on *the erasure of human history* and the separation of nature from human activity (Williams 1980, 82). Williams’ idea that “nature contains, though often unnoticed, an extraordinary amount of human history” suggests that wildernesses are instead sites of *cultural production* (Williams 1980, 68). In the case of Haida Gwaii, the “wilderness” quality of the area was in part the result both of the smallpox epidemics and the impermanence of logging and mining camps, rather than of a landscape that has remained untouched by humans since the beginning of time. Indeed, one of the major sites of friction in the South Moresby struggle was constituted by the opposing views different actors held of what counts as nature and how it should be valued.

acted as a cohesive whole, and the environmental perspective appeared as one coherent discourse.

As I discussed in the Introduction, “nature” is a term the definition of which is critical to the criteria used to establish and manage many types of protected areas including nature reserves, wilderness areas, and national parks.²⁷

This particular construction of South Moresby’s wilderness was circulated across the globe through a variety of media. Cultural texts such as newspapers, news reels and radio reports collectively narrated events, actions, and decisions through particular angles and to particular publics. I see two texts as being particularly significant in establishing the global identity of South Moresby as a primeval and unique wilderness. The first was a three-part feature on South Moresby titled “Windy Bay: Wilderness Under Siege” that aired in the Fall of 1982 on CBC Television’s *The Nature of Things* with David Suzuki. With an audience of over one million, Suzuki, already a world-renowned and popular scientist, unapologetically voiced his support for saving the South Moresby wilderness. The series provided the first aerial shots of the area, and extended the debate to a national audience.

²⁷ Despite the colonial underpinnings of its agenda of saving a wilderness that was rendered purer because it was unpeopled - even as members of the Haida community continued to live in seasonal camps throughout the area - the IPS considered itself an ally of the Haida. For example, while the IPS’s initial wilderness proposal talked about respecting the “rights and privileges of the Haida people in their current use of this area or future land negotiations”, its support of the actions of the Skidegate Band Council was contingent on the Council “managing those lands which they select in this area for goals similar to those expressed in this proposal.” As well, in *Islands at the Edge* (1984), there was little attempt to recognise the Haida as a living nation, or as a people that were separate from nature, an absorption that renders them invisible. “The people,” Bill Reid, one of the contributors writes, “are as unusual and in some ways as unique as their environment – the Haida” (27). (Reid also euphemistically refers to colonial Europeans as “the great subduers”).

The second defining text was a hardcover coffee table book that had been compiled by the IPS in 1984 titled *Islands at the Edge: Preserving the Queen Charlotte Islands Wilderness*. Arguably the canonical text of the struggle, the book features a number of well-known contributors, including artist Bill Reid, then-director of the British Columbia Ecological Reserves Program Bristol Foster, and French explorer and *National Geographic* contributor Jacques Cousteau, who wrote the book's foreword. *Islands at the Edge* contains over one hundred colour photographs of the threatened forests and animals of South Moresby, including breathtaking vistas, intertidal worlds, breaching whales, and fallen totem poles, which collectively succeeded in capturing South Moresby as a unique and one-of-a-kind wilderness. The book was a success, and thousands of copies of its first and only printing were snapped up around the world (the book now fetches upwards of \$100 on EBay).

Although *The Nature of Things* and *Islands at the Edge* occurred amidst a number of intense (though less visual) campaigns for the preservation of the South Moresby wilderness led by the IPS and aided by several high-profile national and international environmental organisations,²⁸ I point to these two examples because of the particular way in which they introduced national

²⁸ Including the Sierra Club, which had sponsored a travelling slide show of the area proposed in the SMWP, the Pacific Seabird Group, an international group of biologists from 39 countries that had passed a resolution calling for protection of critical seabird nesting habitat in the South Moresby area.

and international audiences to the aesthetic splendours of South Moresby. By grounding South Moresby in environmental ideals and as an “internationally significant site of environmental meaning,” its essence became both localised and globalised (Sandilands, in review, 25). In other words, the effect of both of these texts was to make South Moresby a unique place locally and in the world.

As images of South Moresby’s landscape circulated on television and in magazines across the globe, support for “saving South Moresby” grew. The archipelago increasingly became a stormy site of competing ideas of land use and ecology (and later of aboriginal rights and title) for many people who did not live on the islands, most of whom had never even visited them. Local, national, and global public spheres were brought together in part by the “modern technologies of vision”, such as those used by *The Nature of Things* and *Islands at the Edge* (Braun 2002, 76). Yet the high-publicity work of international environmental organisations such as Greenpeace and its anti-whaling and anti-sealing campaigns in the late-1960s and early 70s, had also paved the way for the IPS in popularising environmental issues and ecological vocabularies.²⁹

²⁹ Since the mid-1960s the environmental movement in North America had been undergoing immense change (Buell 2003). Beginning as a groundswell of public opinion, it slowly built itself into government bureaucracy. By the 1970s, conservation groups still existed and many thrived, but they were increasingly joined by big government. (It is little wonder then, that most of the IPS’s campaigns were funded by Environment Canada). Reflecting on the institutionalisation of the environmental movement, Moira Farrow, an environment columnist for the *Vancouver Sun* wrote on July 11, 1980 “simple little arguments such as

Industry and Logging Critiques

It was not until a few years into its campaign that the IPS began to critique the practices of the forest industry. There had been growing concern about silvicultural practices in BC since the release of the Report of the Pearce Commission in the mid-1970s, in which the federally appointed commission concluded that forests across the country had been mismanaged by the provinces. The report prompted *Vancouver Sun* environment columnist Moira Farrow to comment on June 20, 1976 that BC was “running out of trees.”

Beginning in the early 1980s, the IPS made use of scientists, statisticians, lawyers, social scientists, journalists, and even politicians to contest the legitimacy of clear cut logging on an ecological, social, and economic basis. The gist of this aspect of the campaign was that poor logging practices were wiping out fish habitat, causing massive erosion, and threatening the long-term future of the forestry industry. An important part of the IPS’s argument was that the license to log Burnaby Island (and later Lyell Island) had been granted in violation of the Forest Service’s own guidelines, which prohibited logging on slopes in excess of 65 per cent. These often sophisticated analyses included customised GIS maps depicting land use patterns and statistically-based reports, and were deployed at the national and at the

villagers fighting a local logging company are becoming rarer. Most environmental confrontations now have casts of thousands with public hearings, government reports, civil

international level, mostly through print media.³⁰ What is remarkable is how the IPS was able to use the state's own mechanisms of economics and science against it in order to destabilise the official discourses that legitimised logging in the first place. The practices of the forestry industry had long been rationalised on the basis that the industry was the economic "bread and butter" of the province, and that forests were best managed according to scientific principles, which is how the forest industry managed them. In truth, as the IPS pointed out, jobs in the forestry industry had been falling since the 1960s due to increased mechanisation, the lack of value added companies operating out of BC, and the industry's overrun by multinational corporations (MNCs).³¹ Moreover, as the Pearse Commission had shown, scientific management had not prevented the mismanagement of forests and nor the fundamental unsustainability of BC's forestry industry.

disobedience and even royal commissions."

³⁰ Not surprisingly, the IPS's critiques were heavily criticised by the industry. For example, a 1982 pamphlet put out by the International Woodworkers of America titled *Livelihood of 180 Queen Charlotte Islands Residents Threatened* stated: "We think the IPS is prostituting the vehicle of public meetings to serve their own minority points of view and perhaps hoping to make enough noise and advance enough phoney ecological arguments using phrases like terrestrial ecosystems, detritous cycles, micro diversity etc., to force a mortitorium on logging the Windy Bay Watershed" (sic).

³¹ For several decades after the introduction of the TFL system in the 1940s the operation of large processing facilities, the harvesting of increasing volumes of timber, and favourable market conditions generated high wage employment and a good standard of living for families and communities in many areas of BC. But over this same period, increased mechanization in all phases of the forest industry had caused the absolute number of jobs in the logging industry in BC to decrease, even as the annual cut level increased: in 1961 there were two jobs per 1000 m³ harvested and a total of 32,000,000 m³ cut, while in 1991 the annual cut had risen to 74,000,000m³ but the number of jobs per 1000m³ had decreased to 0.88. (M'Gonigle and Parfitt 1994, 21).

By shifting positions away from one of saving nature for its own sake to one of crusading against the evils of industrial capitalism and multinational industry that had made forestry management practices in BC unsustainable, the IPS was able to represent itself discursively as an environmental movement within a framework that was recognised by certain global audiences. This strategic shift of discourses allowed the IPS to draw upon an analysis of the global discourse of logging that was ultimately rooted in a critique of global capitalism and of scientific management in order to lend itself legitimacy in its dealings with other environmental groups, the provincial (and later federal) government and the Haida. Thus through a range of discursive sites, the IPS was able to continue to cultivate a national and international network of support, as national and global concerns for Haida Gwaii's ecosystems began to focus on old-growth forest and the long-term social impacts of clear cut timber harvesting. By the 1980s, aided by a growing network of sympathisers in an enormously successful campaign, the IPS was able to counter the claims of the forest industry with an elaborate critique of forestry practices and policies phrased in the industry's own language.

The Lyell Island Blockade

While settler society, including the IPS and the provincial government (and later, the federal government), was at the time preoccupied with broader

ecosystem health and productivity, the Haida articulated their demands to stop logging in South Moresby within the framework of traditional culture, subsistence resources and hereditary title. Diane Brown, a young Haida woman stated this tripartite connection clearly in an article in the *Vancouver Sun* dated November 10, 1985: “We are a nation of people at risk today...I want to stress that it’s the land that helps us maintain our culture. It is an important part of our culture. Without the land, I fear very much for the future of the Haida Nation.” Brown’s statement is representative of the public Haida position that had been articulated in newspaper articles and television news reels during the period. It is important to point out that an important difference between the Haida position and that of the IPS is that the Haida articulated goals for a comprehensive conservation (as opposed to fossilising the land through preservation) that clearly linked social justice with ecological sustainability and national identity.

Much of the advocacy for habitat conservation and against continued clear-cut logging in South Moresby focused on the provincial government. A survey of newspaper clippings from the *Globe and Mail*, the *Province*, and the *Vancouver Sun* reveals a public perception that provincial government institutions threatened the region’s biological well being (one angry letter to the *Vancouver Sun* editor dated November 9, 1985 called the province’s refusal to deal with the issues in South Moresby as “provincial vandalism”).

The 1982 constitutional amendments dictated that the provinces had exclusive power to develop, conserve, and manage non-renewable resources and forestry resources. Yet, unlike federal legislation, provincial legislation does not have a clear *legal* basis for restricting extractive activities (May 1998, 285), nor are provinces bound to a national comprehensive mandate for conserving biodiversity and sustainable development. Although it had argued that it needed the province's consent to intervene, the combination of a constitutional shift in jurisdiction over resources and lands and fear of redress of colonial practices and meant that the federal government reacted slowly to the dispute, and preferred instead to let the provincial government handle the growing unrest on the archipelago.

By the fall of 1985, the province had responded to the IPS' and the Haida Nation's calls for public consultation in the renewal of TFL No.24 by appointing the Wilderness Advisory Committee (WAC). The eight-member committee represented federal and provincial agencies, the forest industry, selected members of the public, but no members of the Haida community. In its report, which was released a mere two weeks later, the WAC presented four options for land use in South Moresby. Each "scenario" differed in terms of sizes of its natural zone, ranging from a small natural zone that would retain some recreational activities, to a large natural zone that would limit – but not ban – mineral exploration. An article that appeared in the *Montréal*

Gazette on October 17, 1985 had quoted a representative of the Sierra Club saying of the WAC: "This is a stalling tactic. And you get the idea that the committee's recommendations will favour logging interests." Indeed, in late October the provincial government voted to accept in principle the WAC's recommendation that most of South Moresby be logged except for a small strip of ecological reserve in the most southerly area of the archipelago. On October 18, 1985, BC Minister of Forests Tom Waterland issued three cutting permits to Western Forest Products (which had recently purchased Rayonier Canada) covering 87 hectares of Lyell Island (*Haada Laas* 1986, 4). Beginning October 30, 1985, twenty members of the Haida Nation built two cabins and a stone roadblock on Lyell Island near Sedgewick Bay in such a way as to position the Haida protestors between the logging camp and the new cutting blocks. The blockade lasted for thirty days and saw seventy-two people arrested and charged with mischief for blocking the road - all of who were Haida except for Burnaby NDP MP Svend Robinson.

Both the provincial government and the forestry industry had taken a strict legal position when the decision was made to grant logging permits for Lyell Island. On the first day of the blockade Frank Beban, the owner of the company under contract to Western Forest Products to log in South Moresby, told the Haida blockaders: "You're breaking the law...We have the legal right to log here, and we intend to log here...We'll let the courts

decide" (*Athlii Gwaii*, 2003). BC Forestry Minister Tom Waterland stated in the *Vancouver Sun* on the day after the blockade was constructed that despite the Haida's claim to the territory, Western Forest Products had the "right" to cut timber on Lyell. He added, "every time someone makes a claim to an area of land, we can't go and turn history back or the forest industry would be dead."³²

The efforts of the logging industry and the provincial government to deny the Haida credibility as they participated in the blockade were part of a greater attempt to obscure the underlying political issue of the land dispute. Yet the manner in which the Haida conducted the blockade before the media made these efforts increasingly ineffective over time. One way in which Canadians were asked to view the Haida during the blockade was as victims of a network of Canadian legal, economic and political institutions that had alienated them from making decisions about their land. "Our people did not become the victims of cultural genocide," one Haida protestor testified in the *Vancouver Sun* on October 31, 1985, "we are loggers, fishermen, office workers, and the unemployed. We are a nation forced into civil disobedience to protect the only future we have". Moreover, the fact that three Haida

³²May writes of the BC government during this time, "A political solution was not possible. The BC government was intransigent. It would not open land-claim negotiations. It would not halt logging...With its head firmly in the sand, it would wait out the crisis: wait for the whole problem to go away; wait for the Haida to be hauled away by the long arm of the law; wait for Beban to finish logging on Lyell Island; wait for the next provincial election" (May 1990, 117).

elders were the first to face arrest proved to be a public embarrassment for the provincial government, and undermined its criminalisation effort.

Public support for the Haida also helped to prevent the provincial government in particular from criminalising them.³³ A province-wide poll conducted by the *Vancouver Sun* on November 13, 1985 indicated that sixty percent of British Columbians thought the premier should negotiate native land claims, and fifty percent supported the Haida in their stand, while thirty-one percent were opposed. The provincial government could thus no longer hide behind the alleged public interest in maintaining the forestry economy in its refusal to address the South Moresby issue. Indeed, without public support, or the appearance of it, the Haida might simply have been crushed by the provincial government. When the effort to criminalise them failed, the Haida were able to publicly demonstrate legitimate grievance, forcing the government to address their issues.

³³ An account of the Canadian newspaper coverage serves to underscore the extent to which the developments in this particular phase of the conflict were broadcast provincially and nationally. For a period of three weeks – from the start of the blockade on Lyell Island in late 1985 until shortly after the first arrests – the *Vancouver Sun*, with the exception of one day, ran a minimum of one daily story on South Moresby. The story appeared on the front page for nine days. During the same time, the *Globe and Mail* ran eleven articles. Together with articles carried by four major Canadian newspapers (the *Calgary Herald*, *Winnipeg Free Press*, *Montreal Gazette*, and the *Toronto Sun*) at least forty-eight articles were written on the South Moresby struggle during this period. This level of attention continued into early December 1985, making the blockade and its aftermath a front-page, national media event in Canada for approximately one and a half months.

The raising of the blockade on Lyell Island marked a distinct shift in the *story* the media were telling about South Moresby. A tally of the two biggest dailies on the mainland, the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Province*, reveals that the story had shifted from one of a battle between environmentalists and the forestry industry to one that was about the struggle for Aboriginal sovereignty. This turn in the overarching narrative of the media did not, however, act to displace the imperative to save South Moresby from logging; rather, by equating the survival of their traditional culture and community with environmental protection, the Haida were able to articulate their demands to a public that for the past nine years had been exposed to the environmental claims being made about South Moresby without compromising their own claims to nationhood. The Haida articulated their claim to nationhood in different ways for the next few months. Shortly after the blockade had first been put up, nine Haida renounced their Canadian citizenship as a way of reaffirming their sovereignty. At the time, Chief Dempsey Collinson wrote a letter to the *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer* on November 15, 1985 that stated: "We are looking at stopping the logging. We are expecting a battle, a legal battle anyway. It might be prolonged, it might be brief, but we know where we stand. This island has never been conceded to any government in any way shape or form. This is a declaration of our ownership." Six months later the Council of the Haida Nation filed a comprehensive land claim of Haida Gwaii with the Canadian government

claiming all of Haida Gwaii. A nebulous type of “First Nations environmentalism” thus opened up the possibility for a non-Haida public to understand the Haida Nation’s decolonisation effort through its adaptation of the notions of wilderness preservation and well-stewarded cultural landscapes.³⁴

South Moresby National Park

The blockade on Lyell Island ended in late November of 1985 after Beban Logging filed a second court injunction that prohibited the protestors from blocking the road. Logging on Lyell Island resumed at a feverish pace out of fear that operations would soon be shut down (*All Alone Stone*, Winter 1986). Yet the intense coverage of the national news media during the blockade had put increased domestic and international pressure on the provincial government to “deal with South Moresby.” One letter to the editor that appeared in the *Vancouver Sun* on February 8, 1986 read: “Did you ever stop to think that the main reason the BC government doesn’t recognise the validity of native claims is because it doesn’t recognise the validity of our native land? Although BC is a nation of land-users, the province has no land use policy. Wilderness preservation is as alien as E.T.”

³⁴ The transformation of wilderness ideals (including the separation of humans from nature) have come to represent the political strategies associated with the revitalisation of many First Nations communities. See for example M’Gonigle, 1988.

Perhaps the most damning judgement came from Peter Pearse, chair of the 1974 Pearse Commission on BC forests, who clarified once and for all that the current crisis of forests in South Moresby and BC writ large was in fact a crisis of management. In an op-ed article in the *Vancouver Sun* on February 10, 1985, Pearse wrote: "our forest resources are abundant enough to give us a wide choice in the way we allocate their use and utilise them over time. But we are limiting our freedom of choice with inflexible licensing arrangements combined with rigid rules about how harvests must be spread over time. The difficulty we face in reallocating forests among uses such as wilderness and industrial timber production is not due to the meagreness of our natural resources but to artificially restrictive policies." Pressure on the provincial government to address Haida title also came from unexpected places: the International Woodworkers Association, which had previously supported the loggers and the forestry industry (see footnote 30), issued a statement in the *Vancouver Sun* on January 29, 1985 that read: "we are concerned that the continued government failure to act will result in a more social trauma of the kind recently experience on Lyell Island, which leaves a handful of IWA members to bear financial and stress burdens that should be carried by an entire society."

By mid-1986, facing national and international pressures, the BC government had opened itself to negotiating a proposal by federal Minister of Environment

Tom McMillan to establish a national park in South Moresby. At the time, the idea appeared to emerge by default as the solution that would minimise both the negative impacts of commercial logging and declining old-growth habitat and embarrassment for the provincial government. Yet national park status for South Moresby had first been proposed by the federal government in 1980, following an appraisal that Parks Canada had conducted as part of the nomination process of the Haida village of Ninstints as a UNESCO World Heritage Site under the World Heritage Convention.³⁵ The report indicated the potential of the whole southern Moresby area for national park status, and suggested that the economic value of park tourism could help to offset the losses from an end to the logging. In late spring of 1980, the Vancouver-Kingsway MP for the NDP introduced a private member's bill calling for establishment of a national park in South Moresby to the Canadian Legislature. Although it never came to a vote, the bill quietly gained support "in principle" from a majority of the House members, including the Conservative Opposition under Joe Clark (May 1990, 27-55).

Neither the IPS, nor the CHN, nor the BC government initially supported a national park in South Moresby. The province of BC consistently argued that formal negotiations for the creation of a national park in South Moresby

³⁵ Located on the island of Sgan Gwaii (Anthony Island) near the southern tip of the archipelago, Ninstints' claim to attention was its large collection of standing and fallen totem poles, a long house, and several plank houses. Although the village was abandoned in the late nineteenth century during the smallpox epidemic and the poles and houses were

could not begin until Ottawa cleared its seventeen-year debt for Pacific Rim National Park Reserve on Vancouver Island (May 1990, 144). For its part, the IPS was wary of introducing an institution to the region that had conventionally been concerned with tourism, particularly given the degraded ecology in Pacific Rim area since the National Park Reserve had been established.³⁶ Four years before a park had been mentioned by the federal government, the IPS stated in the Winter 1976 edition of its serial publication *All Alone Stone* that “we do *not* seek ‘park’ status for this area. The Southern Moresby wilderness is entirely too fragile to support development of even the usual tourist facilities. Islanders are still dependent on the health of this region for food gathering and the wilderness experience it has to offer. These qualities must be maintained above all. The lifestyle that existed in harmony with this land for thousands of years should define its use today.”

Letters to the editor appearing in the *Queen Charlotte Islands Observer* and articles in *Haada Laas: The Journal of the Haida Nation* throughout the 1980s suggest that the CHN was willing to consider a national park as a stopgap measure to logging on the islands, but did not support it with any

decaying, an advisor to UNESCO declared on page H6 of the *Vancouver Sun* on July 19, 1980 that Ninistints was “the finest Indian site in the Pacific northwest.”

³⁶ Established in 1970, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve’s ecosystem-related problems are immense: it occupies a thin strip of land along the edge of the Pacific ocean and has an airport in it, a highway through it, a landfill next to it, the communities of Tofino and Ucluelet pressing in from each end, the First Nation community of Esowista pushing out

enthusiasm for reasons of sovereignty. Recognising that national park status would mean relinquishing claims to title, CHN President Miles Richardson stated in an article in the *QCI Observer* appearing on February 23, 1986 that “Aboriginal title is the starting point for negotiation...We want an agreement that will finally recognise your laws and systems and in return you will recognise ours.”

Despite these earlier rejections of federal control of the area, particularly in the form of a national park, in July 1987 the provincial and federal governments forged a deal for agreement to establish South Moresby National Park in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The financial package remains the largest amount ever paid by the Canadian public to create a national park. Worth \$120-million over ten years, the majority of the package was allotted to compensating logging interests, with the remainder being used under the rubric of western diversification to fund projects that aimed to diversify the regional economy and to ease the adjustment from logging to tourism on Haida Gwaii (May 1990).³⁷

How, then, was a national park established on Haida Gwaii when its initial proposal faced such opposition? I see three arguments in particular that were

from the middle, and effects of clear-cut logging on the hills above it and thus on the streams that run out into the ocean.

³⁷ The MoU authorised the transferral of ownership of South Moresby from the province to Canada, and stated that should the national park ever cease to exist, ownership will revert

used by the state to rationalise the establishment of South Moresby National Park in 1987 in the absence of negotiations with the Haida: economic, global ecological narratives, and the appeal to a Canadian identity.

1) The economic argument

In the introduction I argued that beginning with Banff in 1885, park establishment has largely been justified by its projected contribution to local economic capital through tourism. The notion of “green tourism” introduced during provincial-federal negotiations by the federal government was a vaguely defined but persuasive concept, and capitalised on the substantial increase in global wilderness tourism since the early 1980s involving boats, kayaks, helicopters, and float planes. Indeed, as May notes, it was in part the promise of tourism that allowed BC Premier Vander Zalm to reconsider the federal bid to establish a national park in South Moresby (May 1990, 216). At a press conference in the Spring of 1986, federal Minister of Environment McMillan told Vander Zalm: “Times have changed since the days when Mom and Pop and the kids piled into their station wagon and drove to their holiday destination. Now people will pay top dollars for a wilderness tourism experience. The more remote the better” (May 1990, 220). Later, in a speech made before the House of Commons on May 14, 1987, McMillan stated that “The essential appeal of South Moresby is so

to the province of British Columbia. Whether or not the Haida will maintain Gwaii Haanas as a protected area when Haida title is recognised is yet unclear.

universal that its success as an international tourism destination is assured, provided it is saved.”

2) Sustainable development and global ecological narratives

At the same time, an economic sustainable development paradigm had been popularised by the 1987 report to the United Nations on Environment and Development entitled *Our Common Future*. In a press release dated August 6, 1987, the federal government hailed the MoU as a milestone that marked its commitment to principles of sustainable development (and also to certain tenets of the 1980 World Conservation Strategy, in particular those relating to genetic diversity).³⁸ As well, the 1987 annual report of the Regional Economic Development Initiative reveals that development ministries and tourism marketers began referring to ecotourism as a promising manifestation of sustainable development (3). The federal government marketed the park’s promise of cumulative commercialisation

³⁸ The concept of sustainable development was also central to the new economic approaches advocated by the IPS and the CHN throughout the South Moresby conflict. The environmentalist position attempted to qualitatively redefine growth and development by emphasizing equitable and sustainable forms of political ecology, and thus mitigate the conventional quantitative emphasis on economic modernization. In 1984, pressed to provide specific alternatives to logging, IPS co-founder Thom Henley advanced ecotourism as a relatively benign and sustainable alternative to the traditional resource-extractive economies of Haida Gwaii, while warning that, “From 1978 to 1982 the number of visitors to South Moresby on organized commercial tours increased eleven-fold...In addition the numbers of private individuals who visit the area ... has also increased dramatically. At present, with no legislation to curtail logging and mining development and no official park status to safeguard against visitor abuse, South Moresby is suffering the impact of both” (*All Alone Stone* 1984, 145-46). In other words, the impact of ecotourism would have to be monitored, since it seemed to be generating too much new industry. Proponents suggested that ecotourism would provide immediate employment that would compensate for the loss

under the guise of preservation, such that the development of wilderness tourism demonstrated its commitment to sustainable development. The notion of a national park in South Moresby was thus steeped in an economic aura that allowed politicians to take up the cause of saving the environment and a threatened culture even as they committed to economic progress.

The discourse of national park creation in South Moresby was thus given added legitimacy within the global ecological protection narratives enabled by the report of the Brundtland Commission and other international environmental initiatives. Despite the fact that the blockade on Lyell Island had caused the media to temporarily reframe the South Moresby struggle from a battle between environmentalists against the forestry industry to one that centred around the issue of Haida sovereignty, when the federal Ministry of Environment involved itself in the debate in early 1986 it reverted to the IPS's original position of saving a primeval wilderness in its call to establish a national park. For example, in a speech made before the House of Commons on May 14, 1987, McMillan stated: "I do not exaggerate when I say that the eyes of the world are upon us...The islands speak to our genetic memory of a time primeval...untouched by the ravages of time or man. Plants, lichen, birds, fish and insects not found elsewhere thrive in the lush environment of this Canadian Garden of Eden." The federal Minister of

of logging jobs. Taking a longer-term view, they also hoped that ecotourism would promise ecological preservation and economic sustainability.

Environment's invocation of a primeval wilderness as part of the state's efforts to establish a national park in South Moresby allowed it to ignore both the Haida's claim to ownership of Haida Gwaii and the absence of any consultation with the Haida in establishing a national park. This particular discourse worked to legitimise a national park because, as I noted earlier in this chapter, the politics of preserving South Moresby were rooted in an environmental discourse that positioned the area as a unique and unparalleled landscape, in both Canada and in the world. McMillan later stated in the same speech, "We owe it to ourselves, to the world community as a whole and to generations yet unborn to save what is the most internationally significant wilderness treasure in all of Canada." By framing the national park in South Moresby as serving a global interest, its establishment was seen as rational.

3) Canadian "natural" identity

A final argument that rationalised the park's creation was the appeal to a particular mode of Canadian national identity that locates itself in a naturalised relationship between Canadians and nature. As I noted in the introduction, throughout their history the national parks have consistently been used to nurture and promote a link between Canadian national identity and the natural geography that they embody. McMillan told the House of Commons on May 14, 1987: "It has been said that some countries are

shaped by their history, others by their geography. I believe that in large measure Canada belongs in the latter category. It is a statement about our sense of nationhood that Canadians from coast to coast care deeply, even passionately, about a small family of islands which many of them have never seen but which they know instinctively ought to be saved because they are a part of themselves.” In both a preplanning report to Parks Canada and the press release that announced the new South Moresby National Park dated July 6, 1987, the park was touted as a “new model for parks in Canada.” The state’s ongoing quest for a national identity for Canada meant that it positioned South Moresby National Park as integral in maintaining a source of inspiration, identity, and community for Canadian culture.

Co-Management in Gwaii Haanas: 1987-1993

The 1987 Memorandum of Understanding between the provincial and federal governments had been drafted unilaterally by the federal Minister of Environment and was unacceptable to the Haida, primarily because it included a ministerial veto on any decision made in the park. The starting position of the CHN had been that it must have an equal say in all decisions affecting Gwaii Haanas. Yet under the National Parks Act, the Minister of Environment (and the Minister of Canadian Heritage since 1993) has ultimate decision-making authority in national parks. The process of negotiation between Canada and the Haida began in the fall of 1987, when the Haida

presented their own draft of a Canada/Haida agreement regarding land management of South Moresby. The agreement was immediately rejected by the federal Justice Department because it contained Haida claims to sovereignty and land ownership. The CHN submitted a number of subsequent drafts to the Justice Department over the next several months in which it attempted to neutralise the language without significantly altering content. The document remained unacceptable, and the Justice Department consistently objected to any kind of land claim mentioned in the agreement, stating that Canada alone had sovereignty.

Canada/Haida negotiations stalled when a final Canada/BC agreement was signed without Haida consent in July 1988, one year after the MoU had been established. In September 1988 when Parks Canada outlined how the agreement's "diversification fund" would be spent, the Haida responded by demanding that no initiative should be undertaken on Haida Gwaii until a Canada/Haida agreement was reached. The Haida's position was respected locally (*Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, September 22, 1988 and November 10, 1988), and although Parks Canada did not go along with the Haida Nation's request in any strict sense, the agency held back on some of the more visible aspects of the park establishment process.

In the absence of any negotiations with the federal government, the Haida simply continued to manage the South Moresby area themselves, implementing a mandatory permit system for park visitors, charging fees, and conducting tours through the Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program (*Haida Laas*, 1992). The continued threat of Haida confrontation re-opened negotiations between Canada and the Haida Nation in 1989. For example, one of the Haida Gwaii Watchmen's management decisions was to close down Hot Springs Island (an illegal move under Canadian law), a hot spring pool that was popular with locals and tourists. This shutdown was clearly linked to the lack of a management agreement with the federal government and represented the assertion of Haida management autonomy in the area. Occasionally during this period, the Haida Nation issued a warning that the park would be closed to tourists unless the question of joint management was resolved (May 1990, 313).

When negotiations between the CHN and Canada resumed in 1989, the federal government finally proposed that the area be made a national park reserve specifically avoided compromising native land claims. At the time, Miles Richardson agreed that a park reserve seemed to satisfy the Haida's three major immediate concerns: that logging and other industrial resource extraction in South Moresby be stopped; that the Haida interest and traditional uses there be respected while aboriginal claims are negotiated;

that an interim solution would not prejudice a land claim settlement (*Queen Charlotte Islands Observer*, August 1989). The negotiation climate was better than it previously had been, and the basic terms of a co-management agreement between the CHN and the federal government were established. In the Spring of 1990 the people of Haida Nation decided by referendum to authorise the CHN to enter into the Gwaii Haanas/South Moresby Agreement with the Government of Canada.

In its simplest terms, the "Gwaii Haanas Agreement" is an interim agreement pending the eventual settlement of land claims. The structure of the Agreement acknowledges the different positions regarding ownership without prejudicing eventual land claim settlement. The Agreement dictates that a management board of equal members of Haidas and Canadians would consider all matters of planning, management, and operations. Staffing would be done by the approval of both parties with the exception of continuing Haida activities which include fishing, hunting, trapping, gathering medicine and plant food, using the trees for traditional or artistic purposes, and living in the area.

Until the Agreement was signed, Canada had refused to acknowledge that there was a dispute over the ownership of Haida Gwaii because to do so would mean that it would have to resolve the dispute. In the Agreement, the

federal government not only admitted that there is a dispute, it also acknowledged the Haida Nation's designation of the Gwaii Haanas Haida Heritage Site on the same level as its own, thereby supporting other Haida designations by recognising that the Haida Nation may make land designations. The Haida are thus *not* under the authority of the *National Parks Act* – this forms the basis of the Agreement. Indeed, one of the most significant features of the Agreement is that it recognises the Constitution of the Haida Nation, which is not the constitution of a society or charitable organisation as are most constitutions, but the Constitution of a Nation.

Shared jurisdictional models in British Columbia are uncommon, and power-sharing agreements such as those outlined in the Gwaii Haanas Agreement are possible only through government-to-government negotiations between First Nations and Canadian governments (www.dogwoodinitiative.org). Importantly, this management regime has been enabled by the Haida Nation's strategic assertion of Title throughout the South Moresby struggle and its unilateral designation of the area as a Haida Heritage Site.

Both the Canadian government and the Council of the Haida Nation continue to consistently emphasise, albeit in different ways and through different projects, the connection between the land and Canadian/Haida culture and identity. In the next and final chapter I explore the dynamics inherent in the

co-management of Gwaii Haanas as a site through which these two nations negotiate their respective positions within the global mosaic.

Chapter Two

Managing Nature and Culture in Gwaii Haanas

In the Introduction, I argued that operating parks as engines of local economic growth has meant that their main attraction – nature – has been closely tied to the political economy of tourism, and as such has been constituted and commodified in ways that make people want to visit the parks. I also pointed to a particular Canadian nationalist discourse that is present in the confluence of changing articulations between nature and its commodification through capitalism in national parks policy. Finally, I argued that increased First Nations presence and participation in Parks Canada's representational and management practices is subject to a Canadian nationalist tenor and is rooted in an attempt to *domesticate* First Nations' sovereignty and interests in managing their own lands. I concluded that these modes of tolerance are pseudo-postcolonial insofar as the state continues to act as though it possesses a monopoly on legitimation.

In Chapter One, I looked at the nineteen-year battle over the South Moresby wilderness that culminated in the creation of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site in 1993. I focused on select conjunctures that best illustrated the complex economy of rights and claims that were at work on Haida Gwaii during this period in order to tease out the discursive differences between certain interests. I also explored how some of these

interests were positioned as legitimate and rational at different times and by different actors and discourses. I concluded that the state rationalised the imposition of a national park designation in South Moresby in the absence of negotiating with the Haida on the basis that the park would generate sufficient economic activity so as to replace the forestry industry in that area, that the park would be serving a global interest in wilderness preservation, and that “saving South Moresby” would serve to uphold a particular version of Canadian national identity that located itself in a naturalised relationship between Canadians and nature.

In the present chapter, I use an official park text to highlight the ways in which a national park on Haida Gwaii is used as a means to insert national ideas and state-centred knowledges into the Haida Nation’s territory. Using the *Management Plan for the Terrestrial Area for Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site* (hereafter referred to as the Management Plan), I argue that the co-management arrangement between the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation is used as a symbol of legitimacy for Gwaii Haanas. I elaborate on the wilderness critique I discussed in the previous chapter by drawing out the ways that the National Parks mandate was revised with the formation of Gwaii Haanas to accommodate a new understanding of the relationship between human and non-human interests. I explore how the Management Plan in particular

facilitates particular representations of wilderness and Haida heritage as tourist commodities. I conclude with a discussion of co-management in a postcolonial age, and consider whether co-management in Gwaii Haanas is a radical act of inclusion and participation.

The Terrestrial Management Plan

The thirty-seven page Management Plan is jointly authored by the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation. The body of the Management Plan details the park reserve/heritage site's eight management goals: protecting natural heritage, respecting cultural heritage, sustaining the continuity of the Haida culture, presenting natural and cultural heritage, managing visitor use, providing tourism opportunities, demonstrating environmental responsibility, and managing information for integrated decision-making. When Parks Canada took over the management of the South Moresby area from the provincial government in 1988, the agency had historically been more concerned with providing public services for tourism than managing natural habitat and protecting biological resources. Not surprisingly then, in some places the Management Plan reads more like a tourism planning document than one that sets out how to manage the biophysical features of Gwaii Haanas.

Through these eight management goals, the reader is invited to “evaluate” park management through strategies and actions that contribute to standards of economic development (tourism), rational management (scientific expertise) and, most prominently, through co-management between Parks Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation. All of these appear as appropriate management goals because they appeal to economic, scientific, and political *rationality*, and thus ostensibly meet the public’s expectation of what park management should look like. As a sort of blueprint for success with respect to negotiations in the midst of contentious land claims, the Management Plan is an attempt to meet the public’s expectation of co-management between a First Nation and the Canadian nation.

The Management Plan is widely available and free by requesting it through Parks Canada’s website. At first glance, the Management Plan provides an overview of the goals and strategies for terrestrial management in Gwaii Haanas. It is significant to note, however, that in addition to Parks Canada’s Gwaii Haanas website, it is the only state publication that is currently available for the Gwaii Haanas visitor (a visitor’s guide was supposed to have been available online in February 2006). The Management Plan is thus one of two state interfaces that mediates the remote visitor’s experience of the park reserve/heritage site. While tourist guides to Haida Gwaii and Gwaii Haanas also mediate these experiences, in the absence of a Parks Canada

“What to Do While You’re Here” publication that is common to other parks, I argue that the Management Plan acts as an official state tour guide by proxy. As a state document the Management Plan acts to facilitate both a particular kind of experience with the natural world and a particular tourist experience of park going. In sum, the Management Plan helps to frame the park reserve/heritage site for the virtual visitor, and constructs everything for the reader, from *what* is looked at to *how* it is looked at.

Co-Management and Colonial Erasure

The Agreement is celebrated in the Management Plan as a “unique political milestone and world model for cooperative management” (3) and as “a model of how two parties with different views can work together to protect special areas of the world” (9). Despite conflicting viewpoints regarding land ownership, the Management Plan tells us “the Agreement was able to get past these differences and establish opportunities for joint effort” (3). An excerpt from the “Foreword” of the Management Plan reads: “The plan not only provides comprehensive strategic direction for managing Gwaii Haanas, but *it also serves as an example of cooperative effort and marks an important milestone in the relationships of Canada and the Haida Nation*” (1, emphasis added). The discourse of co-management in the Management Plan is thus imbued with a sense of, reconciliation, and is used as a symbol of improved relations between the Haida and the Government of Canada.

The Management Plan does not mention that the Gwaii Haanas Agreement also acknowledges the existence of two distinct yet equal *land designations* for Gwaii Haanas: as a Haida Heritage Site and as a National Park. Instead, these two politically distinct land designations are consistently fused throughout the text as National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site, obscuring the nineteen-year long conflict prior to the signing of the Agreement, not to mention the legal oddity of the overlap. The political agency of the Haida that enabled this unique arrangement as exercised through the strategic assertion of title, is left out of the Management Plan.

The celebratory framing of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement in the Management Plan does not preclude recognition of the challenges of co-management. "This is the first time a management board comprised of indigenous and Government of Canada representatives has worked on an equal and cooperative basis to produce a management plan. Since there have been no models to follow, innovation and flexibility have been required to achieve true cooperative management" (5). This statement deserves our attention for at least two reasons. First, while we are encouraged to *appreciate* the gesture towards equality and cooperation between the two nations in Gwaii Haanas' management, we are not invited to *interrogate* it. The text does not detail the co-management framework (how are decisions made, how Board

members are elected, etc.); nor does it acknowledge the inequalities between the two parties. Instead, power-sharing rhetoric is deployed to suggest that both parties are on equal footing, thus suspending the need for any specific details of the arrangement. The *appearance* of legitimacy is what is important here, rather than the actual details of the co-management arrangement by which the reader may judge its merits.

Second, the above statement suggests that relations between the two nations have not always been based on equality and cooperation, although this is not directly stated. Indeed, "*true* cooperative management" indicates that the current arrangement may not only be haunted or troubled by earlier, more explicitly *colonial* relations between the two nations, but also suggests the failure of previous, less true cooperative management arrangements and attempts at power-sharing between the two governments. In short, the Management Plan's celebration of Gwaii Haanas' co-management arrangement between the Government of Canada and the Haida Nation acts to *move beyond* colonial displacement, which, when one considers the ongoing colonial nature of these relations, is in effect erasure. In casting Canada as a benevolent nation whose members permit First Nations voices to be heard, a stance that is dependent on its erasure of colonial violence, the co-management relationship appears legitimate. The heroic narrative of co-management thus displaces Gwaii Haanas from its specific political,

cultural and historical contexts and reinserts it into a rhetorical and illusory space of equality and justice.

This discourse of reconciliatory co-management acts as the backbone of the Management Plan, and all of its sections reflect this splitting of power, of views, and of approaches to the land. Moreover, as I discuss presently, the celebratory narrative of co-management (and co-authorship) *authorises* particular representations and uses of indigeneity, rendering co-management a rather problematic organising narrative of the park reserve/heritage site. The representational practices at work in the Management Plan put an interesting twist on Bruce Braun's assertion that authority is "awarded" through discursive displacements that position certain objects in *need* of representation (Braun 2002, 77). In the context of the Management Plan, the legitimacy of the federal government's authority is established through an appeal to co-management between coloniser and colonised, and through what reads as a concession of power. Truth is validated or legitimised by grounding it in a corrected relationship (that of co-management) between First Nations and the Government of Canada.³⁹

³⁹ It is important to recognise that the point here has not been to critique the co-management framework, but to illuminate the rhetorical tactics it enables.

Marketing Nature (Wilderness)

Nature and its products were commodities, subject to supply and demand, scarcity and abundance, and constantly in need of management. (Wilson 1991, 136)

In the “Appropriate Marketing” section of the Management Plan, readers are told that Gwaii Haanas’ specific tourism niche caters to “people seeking a challenging north pacific wilderness destination and a Haida cultural experience” (9). In this and the next section I discuss the commodification of nature and culture in the Management Plan as a *particular kind of experience* of nature.

The Management Plan capitalises on Gwaii Haanas’ remoteness in part to attract visitors that would otherwise be deterred by its isolation. Given the relative absence of any infrastructure or guides,⁴⁰ visitors are invited to “experience the environment on its own terms” (6). “Gwaii Haanas is a serene and wild place where natural processes occur unimpeded...” (7) that offers visitors “the opportunity to experience remoteness and solitude” (10).⁴¹ The number of visitors on the islands at any one time is controlled to minimise environmental impacts as well as to “ensure the quality of the wilderness experience” (10).

⁴⁰ Visitors are encouraged to take guided tours provided by Parks Canada-approved tour operators, but such tours are not mandatory.

In the Introduction to this paper, I argued that the logic of commodification of nature in national parks is such that as commodities themselves, the parks are faced with the difficult task of having to produce nature as an independent and “wild” spectacle and at the same time to differentiate between natures so that people will want to visit all of the different parks. In the Management Plan, Gwaii Haanas’ remoteness enables the commodification of a purer, more authentic, and wilder wilderness than other, more accessible wilderness areas; in effect, a move into a rationality that can, it seems, “manage” nature better than nature itself. Derek Gregory (2001) argues that conventionally, European modernity was measured by the distance it was supposed to have travelled from its own nature (Gregory 87). “Modern cultures,” he writes, “were supposed to have dissected nature so deeply and to have imposed themselves upon nature so forcefully that they were no longer at its mercy, whereas premodern cultures were regarded as creatures of their containing natures whose institutions, practices and possibilities were conditioned and limited by the caprice of their local ecologies” (Gregory 88). It is interesting to see how this position is reversed in the Management Plan. Here, modernity or progress is represented as letting nature “run wild” in Gwaii Haanas: as a triumphant movement away from the more manicured and produced natures of older national parks. But in embracing wildness the Management Plan still appeals to the same logic

⁴¹ Interestingly, despite its remoteness and wildness, Gwaii Haanas is not presented as a dangerous place.

as older texts did when subduing nature: we are only able to embrace wilderness and wildness unselfconsciously precisely *because* we feel that we have sufficiently distanced ourselves from the premodern position, such that we could no longer ever be premodern. Again, this “return to wildness” is able to occur only because we are sufficiently secure in our triumph over nature in territories and realms outside of Gwaii Haanas. Gregory writes that such “imaginative achievements” are made possible by privileging the “*production of space* and ha[ve] been drawn to the multiplication of enclosures and partitions that demarcate the colonising from the colonised” (Gregory 2001, 87, emphasis in original).

The fact that the Management Plan suggests that Gwaii Haanas is embodied as a primeval nature is interesting here, because progress is typically made visible by reflecting on the past and seeing how far we’ve come. As I discussed in the Introduction, the particular version of Nature that has always been commodified in the national parks is one that positions it as an historical agent, a rendition that lends historical authenticity to Canada’s presence by grounding the young nation firmly in its national territory. In her examination of Canadian nationalism, Eva Mackey discusses the twist that Canadian narratives sometimes have on the Enlightenment notion of history as progress. She argues that while progress in Western thought has often been seen as a process of mastering nature, Canada’s progress is sometimes

imagined as a movement from “a wild and virginal land to a developed, forward-looking, tolerant nation that cares for its environment” (Mackey 1999, 79)

In writing about different justifications for practices of wilderness preservation, Thomas H. Birch (1990) suggests that wildness in any nature reserve is a fiction: “self-determination is not permitted for nature, even in legally established wilderness reserves...Instead, wild nature is *confined* to official wilderness reserves” (139). We are in fact *incapable* of granting nature self-determination – or letting the wilderness be, as Gwaii Haanas purports to do – because to do so would mean surrendering some of our own power, something “we” (read: the North American imperium) are clearly unwilling to do. By arguing that we literally incarcerate nature in reserves, Birch is able to put forth the idea that wildness is dead. He writes: “designated wilderness areas become prisons, in which the imperium incarcerates unassimilable wildness in order to complete itself, to finalise its reign. This is what is meant when it is said that there is no wilderness anymore in the contemporary world, in the technological imperium. There is, or will be soon, only a network of wilderness reservations in which wildness has been locked up” (Birch 1990, 142).

In addition to its remote location, Gwaii Haanas' wilderness character is sustained by the fact that there are no permanent residents living in the area.⁴² Since the Haida fled north during the smallpox epidemic there has only ever been a handful of permanent residents living in the South Moresby area (all non-Haida), and all but one had been forced to relocate when the park was formed. As well, most of the terrestrial area does not have any roads or trails. The equation of wilderness with roadlessness is common in North American environmental thought. Roads, Braun writes, "open a region to mass use, and thus once a road enters a region, its 'nature' is destined to be brought within a cultural rather than a natural economy" (Braun 2002, 285). Roads are also a mark of human labour on the land. The absence of roads and trails in most areas of Gwaii Haanas occludes the history of labour in the landscape (most notably, as I discussed in the Introduction, of logging and mining), thus rendering it a true wilderness area. Yet, as I discussed in the last chapter, a portion of Lyell Island is visibly shaved. Lyell is one of the northernmost islands in the park and it is impossible for visitors to miss the shaved portions as they boat or fly from Sandspit south to Gwaii Haanas. Interestingly, none of the tour itineraries offers a stop at Lyell Island, despite its being the point of conception for the park. Other traces of labour that are present on the land are totem poles and old Haida villages, which, as I discuss in the next section, are categorised as culture (tradition) rather than

⁴² One locally owned and run guest house does operate out of the southernmost tip.

labour (modernity). Labour in this case is completely erased from the landscape by making culture appear as part of nature.

Ultimately, wilderness is portrayed as a leisure commodity that affords the opportunity for spiritual rejuvenation away from nature-less and, we are led to believe, unthought urban lives. "Humanity has a need for places to reflect on the genuineness of societal values," the Management Plan states, "places to expand beyond the dimensions of the day to day grind, and fortify the body, mind and spirit...Gwaii Haanas provides people with a touchstone" (7). Wilderness, then, is portrayed as a pure space and thus appropriate for spiritual renewal for upper and middle-class visitors who can afford to visit. William Cronon argues that conventional Western environmental thought posits wilderness in opposition to modernity and the urban, and promotes the idea of wilderness as "the best antidote to our human selves" (Cronon 1995, 69). "Wilderness," Cronon writes, "is the natural, unfallen antithesis of an unnatural civilisation that has lost its soul" (Cronon 1995, 80). A visit to Gwaii Haanas ostensibly allows one to "de-modernise" or "de-civilise" through a return to a nature that is pre-modern and "allowed to evolve in its own way, as it has done since the dawn of time."

Closely related to the wilderness character of the park reserve/heritage site is the colonial notion of discovery in which the park visitor is invited to

participate. In “Towards the Future,” the Management Plan states, “with the coming of summer, visitors from all over the world begin to arrive. Each one of them shares the sensation of being the first person to set foot here” (7). This statement invokes the European colonial fantasy of being the first to discover the land. Visitors, or “guests,” as they are sometimes referred to in the text, are described as making a “pilgrimage” as they traverse the “ancient forests.” These statements are telling because they reveal that the intended “guests” are urban and of European ancestry.⁴³

Wilderness areas are distinguished from ecological areas in the Management Plan. The “Implementing the Management Plan” section of the document states that the aim of the Archipelago Management Board is to “safeguard the *ecological, cultural* and *wilderness* values of the area” (5, emphasis added). This tripartite separation highlights the construction of wilderness as an aesthetic entity in the Management Plan, rather than a biophysical one (this is presumably captured by ecological values). Later, the Management Plan states that ecosystem-based management involves, among other things, “monitoring the state of the environment, and the quality of the *wilderness experience*” (10, emphasis added). Thus eco-system management is as much

⁴³ A report released by Parks Canada titled *June-August 2002 Survey of Client Expenditures, Experiences and Preferences in Gwaii Haanas* reveals that 70 per cent of visitors in that year were Canadian (49 per cent were from BC) and one quarter were American. Average family incomes ranged from \$5,000 to \$450,000. One quarter of respondents made \$100,000 or more, while half reported an annual income of \$50,000 or more. 60 per cent of visitors are female, and most are either single or a couple with no children. A small margin (seven per cent) was single parents.

an aesthetic endeavour as it is a scientific one. This dual role is tied in part to nature's marketing as a tourist commodity: as Braun reminds us, "adventure travel reorders nature through a *visual* logic, not an *ecological* one" (Braun 2002,146).

Commodifying Culture (Indigineity)

As with nature, representations of Aboriginal culture are also subject to their constitution as tourist commodities. It is significant to emphasise that the way in which the Canadian state understands Aboriginal cultures is central to their representation in national parks. Earlier in this paper I argued that our often unquestioned Canadian settler culture is infused with the legacy of particular colonial modes of seeing and being in the natural world, and that colonial assumptions play a privileged role both in the way natures in national parks are constituted and in our experience of them as visitors.

Several "Haida sites" are scattered throughout Gwaii Haanas' terrestrial area, including culturally modified trees, fish weirs, village sites, and totem poles. Some of these sites are over ten thousand years old. Despite the focus on historical cultural sites in both the text and photographs included throughout the document, the Management Plan assures the reader that "the Haida culture is a living culture and traditional use is still practised" (10). Indeed, one of the more unique aspects of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement is that

provision is made for the use of park lands, flora and other natural objects by the Haida for spiritual and cultural purposes, thus opening up new ways of negotiating of human-nature relations in parks.

The Management Plan is explicit in the marketing of Haida culture as a tourist attraction in Gwaii Haanas, and states that “people visit Gwaii Haanas to learn about themselves and the Haida culture” (9). The particular ways in which Haida culture is represented in the text are tied to its constitution as a tourist commodity. As I noted in the Introduction to this paper, tourism is a foundational category for the organisation of park landscapes, and so looking at travel and tourism discourses in park texts can help us to see the ways in which colonial relations and representations continue to inflect these. In the Management Plan, authentic indigeneity is established through conventional signposts of native culture such as totem poles and old longhouses, which in turn are bound to the ideas of “the traditional.” These cultural artefacts are sites to *view*, and not necessarily to *engage* with, insofar as visitors “learn about Haida culture” through visits to specified “cultural sites” (such as those where the Haida Watchmen are stationed), but are not encouraged to visit contemporary, “living” sites within Gwaii Haanas such as the two cabins on Windy Bay on Lyell Island where the Haida staged their blockade in 1985 (14).

Braun writes that authenticity of First Nations identity is often equated with tradition, and that frequently, the recognition of Aboriginal presence is rooted in the requirement that “native presence not exceed the bounds of traditional” (Braun 2002, 163). Braun argues that it is not uncommon to see this conjunction articulated *by* aboriginal groups themselves, which consciously or unconsciously occupy this slot with considerable political effect” (Braun 2002, 81). Tania Murray Li writes that because subaltern agency occurs within hegemonic spaces, “the process of ideological struggle seldom involves a whole new alternative set of terms’ but proceeds rather through the attempt to win some new set of meanings for an existing term or category...dis-articulating it from its place in the signifying structure and rearticulating its associations with other ideas and with particular social forces” (Li 2003, 385). I discuss the reclamation of Haida culture as an act of resistance to colonial conformity and the way in which the fact of co-management shapes this agency presently.

The commodification of indigeneity is closely tied to – and often contingent on – the particular imaginings of an ahistorical wilderness in parks that I have discussed throughout this paper. In the Management Plan, Haida culture is positioned such that it symbolises nature in the parks. For example, in the “Description of Gwaii Haanas” section of the Management Plan, the reader is introduced to three “features” of the park reserve/heritage

site: “vegetation”, “wildlife”, and “the Haida”. The inclusion of “the Haida” in a list of non-human elements of the landscape absorbs the Haida *into* nature, and in the process constitutes First Nations as part of the “natural” beginnings of the nation. The cohesiveness of Western conceptions of wilderness as empty spaces that are void of humans and labour relies on the assumption that First Nations peoples, as long as they remain traditional, are absorbed into the natural landscape. Bruce Braun suggests that this absorption occurs partly because early “scientific explorations” of Canada separated the landscape into vegetation, wildlife, rocks, and Aboriginal peoples. “By constructing discrete entities,” he notes, “these could be apprehended entirely apart from their surrounding, displacing and resituating objects within quite specific, but very different orders of signification” (Braun 2002, 131). While these early explorations did not *create* these categories, they acted to facilitate colonial ways of seeing. The conventional conflation of primeval nature with Aboriginal culture is only sometimes present in the Management Plan. The fact that the Management Plan is *co-authored* by the Government of Canada via Parks Canada and the CHN (as specified on its cover) suggests that this is a *deliberate* framing, however, rather than one that has resulted from “unthought colonialism” and one that is called upon in order to transform the landscape into a more readable tourist landscape for non-Aboriginal visitors (as most, if not all, are).

A (Post)Colonial Text?

Edward Said reminds us that “the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them” (Said 1993, xiii). Narratives, then, do not deliver objective truths but instead convey the story of those with the power to tell their story and prevent others from telling theirs. In the context of the Management Plan, joint authorship ostensibly means that the stories of both the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada are being told. Indeed, co-authorship *should mean* that the voice of the Council of the Haida Nation is directly available to the reader.⁴⁴ Yet granting the Haida “permission to narrate” occludes the fact that the relations between the two nations are far from equal: the persistent disparity in power between the former coloniser and colonised must be considered when examining cultural forms and manifestations. Indeed, the voice of the Haida is still contained by a colonial framework and imaginary. In this final section of the chapter I explore the extent to which Gwaii Haanas’ Management Plan is a postcolonial text: In what ways is the text bound to colonial imaginings? In what ways does it attempt to move beyond these framings? This discussion draws from Braun’s invitation to pay close attention to both resisting essentialising the European gaze as well as avoiding the establishment of colonial/anticolonial binaries. “Vision and

visuality are multiple and unstable,” he writes, “and both the production and the consumption of images must be place within complex social and political contexts” (Braun 2002, 176).

Derek Gregory foregrounds the significance of “imaginative geographies” as one of the enabling conditions of colonial rule (Gregory 2001, 84). One of the effects of imaginative geographies has been to establish a conceptual separation between colonising and colonised societies (86). Yet identifying this separation in the Management Plan – and determining whether such a separation even exists – is potentially problematic given that one must appeal to conventional signposts or symbols of difference between settler and indigenous societies to do so. Recognising this difficulty, in many ways the Management Plan cobbles together two very different views of and approaches to management and custodianship, of relationships between humans and nature, of nature and culture, and of the significance of the land itself. There is a tension in the text between the European (that is, the Canadian government via Parks Canada) “gaze on another landscape” and that of the Haida. The Management Plan does not attempt to explore the connections between these differing viewpoints and is unable to move beyond these binaries. The gazes operate alongside one another, and the result is a document of parallel statements and ways of seeing.

⁴⁴ I am not suggesting the existence of a uniform Haida voice or that the views of all Haida peoples are represented in the text, merely that *one* voice of potentially many is being heard

Does co-management mark a radical break from the past? The answer, unfortunately, is no. Simply, the Management Plan cannot be a postcolonial text (in the sense of having moved beyond colonial relations) because the practice is not. The characterisation of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement as forward-looking allows the Canadian state to pat itself on the back for having entered into the co-management arrangement in the first place, while ignoring the processes that enabled the state to assume a managerial position over the space for over a century - an acknowledgement that would destabilise the celebratory narrative of the Agreement and the Management Plan. Despite its professed commitment to navigating “how two different parties with different views can work together” (MP 6), co-management in Gwaii Haanas can be seen as an attempt to legitimate negotiations that have been conducted “without reference to crucial historical considerations” (Day and Sadik 2002). Indeed, neither in Gwaii Haanas’ Management Plan, the guiding text of the park, nor on Parks Canada’s Gwaii Haanas website, nor in the park’s mandatory visitor orientation sessions in Queen Charlotte City, does the Canadian government mention the (very recent, particularly relative to other national parks) conditions under which the park was created, let alone make an attempt to redress or take responsibility for its complicity in past and ongoing colonial relations with the Haida and their land. Day and Sadik’s assessment of the BC Treaty process as the celebration of diversity

alongside the omission of colonial histories as “an ancillary aspect of the overarching reinscription process to which Aboriginal groups are being subjected across a range of contexts – a process that constructs the government’s willingness to negotiate as an act of ‘benevolence,’ although the alternative to negotiations is nothing at all”, can also be seen in Gwaii Haanas: It is worth quoting them at length:

Narratives about the future and what is new tend to efface the history of ill-treatment that Aboriginal peoples have endured at the hands of the Canadian state. Although references to the historical treatment of Aboriginal peoples are no long uncommon to government documents, they continue to be couched in a rhetoric of absolution that makes them quite unbearable to the informed reader...These broad statements about history – even when claiming to be about reconciliation – allow governments to shape the meaning of the histories that continue to effect the lives of Aboriginal peoples while simultaneously creating the appearance that historical matters have been addressed (Day and Sadik 2002).

In the Management Plan, in addition to modernity or progress, which is represented as letting nature run wild in Gwaii Haanas, European modernity is also celebrated through another aspect of the text: as the incorporation of First Nations’ values and participation into the area’s management. In a sense, the Government of Canada (via Parks Canada) is able to establish itself as hero in this narrative, as a country that cares about its environment and about its native peoples. But we are reminded here of incorporation as a *containing* and colonising practise, and one that continues to operate here despite the heroic narrative. Significantly, the inclusion of First Nations in the

management plan and in the practice of co-management itself is conceived as a form of rationality, rather than appropriation. And in conceiving this (moderated) participation as a rational choice, violence is erased from the park's history.

In short, the Management Plan's celebration of Gwaii Haanas' co-management arrangement between the Government of Canada and the Haida Nation acts to *move beyond* colonial displacement, which, when one considers the ongoing colonial nature of these relations, is in effect erasure. In casting Canada as a benevolent nation whose members permit First Nations voices to be heard, a stance that is dependent on its erasure of colonial violence, the co-management relationship appears legitimate. The heroic narrative of co-management thus displaces Gwaii Haanas from its specific political, cultural and historical contexts and reinserts it into a rhetorical and illusory space of equality and justice.

In what ways is the Haida Nation complicit in (co-) producing (with Parks Canada) "imaginative geographies"? The commodification of Haida culture is certainly one way in which the Haida construct a readable landscape, done in part to achieve a level of control over how white, upper and middle-class visitors view and understand their home (Braun 151). As discussed earlier, the Plan's co-authorship suggests that this is a *deliberate* practice rather than

one that stems from “unthought colonialism”, and one that is called upon in order to transform the landscape into a legible and tourist landscape for non-Aboriginal visitors. The active production of indigeneity as a tourist commodity may thus be seen as a practice of resistance. The reclamation of Haida culture in the Management Plan is potentially strategic: indeed, the possibility of gaining local as well as international support (nearly one quarter of Gwaii Haanas’ annual visitors come from overseas), particularly in advance of the settlement of land ownership, is significant. One thing to consider is to what extent appealing to traditional renditions of Haida culture *undermines* this resistance. One may also look at the ways in which the legitimacy of land claims is cemented – an appeal that also calls on an unbroken tradition.

Yet commodification can also be thought of as a containing practice that operates within the colonial conform. This is especially true when one considers the historical and contemporary conditions, of which economic marginalisation is one, that have made it necessary for the Haida to market commodifiable aspects of their culture in order to earn an income.

In sum, the Management Plan is a site at which both power and resistance operate. Given the unequal power relations between the former coloniser and colonised at work, however, the act of inclusion cements a particular kind of

legitimacy (much in the way Traditional Ecological Knowledge has been incorporated into resource management projects). Legitimacy is grounded in a fantasy of reconciliation between rationality and 'traditional'. In other words, the fact that this is a *management* plan is significant, and is one node in a wider set of relations. One might see a more organic display of conflict rather than "management" in, for example, the weekly meetings of the Archipelago Management Board.

The history of Gwaii Haanas' establishment and management is thus one of an ongoing contest between the values and meanings of nature, preservation, profit, and Haida culture. As in other national parks in Canada, the tourist economy that has emerged with Gwaii Haanas remains bound to the aesthetics, visual consumption, possession and regulation of a national landscape, all the while attempting to maintain a continuous narrative of pride in the Canadian landscape and national identity as a country that cares for its environment and its First Nations.

Conclusion

Forgetting a History, Selling a Park

In this essay, I used a postcolonial environmental lens to examine the particular tensions in a landscape of *two* nations can constitute a *national* park. I examined how this overlap is reflected in the political history and the management of Gwaii Haanas. In exploring the particularities of co-management in cobbling together two overlapping national designations and fundamentally different views of ownership, I argued that a national park in Gwaii Haanas is used as a means to insert national ideas into the Haida Nation's territories as part of the state's ongoing cultural struggle for the representation of Canada. Rather than challenging the fundamental goals and assumptions of a postcolonial industrial society as it purports to do, I argued that Gwaii Haanas' extant representational and management practices actually facilitate global capitalism and colonial assumptions about the relationship between wilderness and civilisation.

Despite the Haida's lengthy history of resistance, which since 1974 had included failed attempts to stop logging in South Moresby through committees, lobbies of parliament, the land-claim process and the courts, Lyell Island rapidly became the arena in which the Haida stood in combat against the logging industry and the federal and provincial governments before the world. Yet the Haida located the beginnings of the difficulties in

South Moresby much earlier in history than did the IPS. In the first chapter, I talked about how in British Columbia, as in other parts of Canada, much of the wealth of settler society has been accrued by exploiting both the labour and the land of the many First Nations and their descendants who call this province home. In the process, First Nations have been constrained to small reserves, denied access to the rest of their land, and excluded from decision-making processes about the use of the land. On Haida Gwaii, this has meant that the land has been managed from afar according to the short-term and economistic interests of settler society (such as large scale clear cut logging) and often at the expense of the ecological integrity of the land, its resources and the Haida.⁴⁵ Ecological degradation on Haida Gwaii is in part rooted in ongoing colonial relations towards both the land and the Haida. In this sense, then, for the Haida, the “South Moresby struggle” was a struggle in the long history of colonialism.

As Kalent notes, the mandate to be individual (as a person or nation) to be sovereign (as an individual, state, or culture), and to be different yet modern, are the values and categories of western colonisers. These demands are at the heart of postcolonial angst over cultural uniqueness, economic globalisation and cultural imperialism, national

⁴⁵ See Martineau 2002 for how Haida Gwaii was historically regarded as a space for raw materials.

integration and local difference (Kalent 2004, 5-9). It is no doubt of continuous concern to the Haida that Canada has made a land designation in South Moresby at all. Indeed, the entire archipelago is designated by the state; even the reserves are a designation of Canada, Naikun Provincial Park, all the tree farms, all the municipalities and all the "crown" lands.

From a political economic perspective, it has been argued that the state performs at least three basic functions in perpetuating dependency and underdevelopment. First, it facilitates the accumulation and concentration of wealth; second, it legitimates, and thereby facilitates, the unequal distribution of wealth; and finally it preserves the above order by maintaining the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Ponting 1986, 199-202). For more than one hundred and fifty years the provincial and Canadian governments exercised all of these functions in their efforts to dismantle and contain Haida autonomy in political and economic life. The resulting dependency has arisen from government policies that favour the dominant economic interests of the core areas at the expense of those in the periphery.

On a superficial level, co-management in Gwaii Haanas is an attempt by the federal government to transform these structures of underdevelopment and

dependency among the Haida. But by not offering redress for its annexation of the Haida land base, nor by reversing the exploitative practices of the forest industry elsewhere on Haida Gwaii, the government continues to be complicit in the persistence of these socially and ecologically unsustainable structures. Rather than addressing these central political and economic issues, the state has instead, through co-management, begun to *permit* the Haida to play a larger role in an unchanged paradigm of nature management through national parks. What autonomy is in *permission to act*?

In many ways the political and economic structures enabled by Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site continue to promote dependency. The Haida remain dependent on the federal government through the Department of Indian Affairs, a relationship not likely to change unless the Haida land claim is resolved. Without the land and economic base that would likely come from such a settlement, the Haida continue to have only wage labour opportunities in the forestry industry and in their association with Parks Canada. Indeed, while the Gwaii Haanas Agreement has the potential to remove major obstacles to building viable local conservation institutions, Parks Canada controls the little funding available and there are few mechanisms to generate money for Haida-led conservation research and management initiatives. Companies from Alberta and Vancouver (and one in Sandspit) have claimed the lion's share of tourism revenues from Gwaii

Haanas, and none of the twelve existing tour operators in the entire archipelago is Haida-owned.

In this sense, despite the utopia of its public appearance, the establishment of a national park in South Moresby is perhaps the least radical of possible outcomes of the struggle. There is nothing innovative about a project that attempts to “conceal and mystify the ways some human cultures continue to dominate the natural world” (Wilson 1991, 254). And there is an inherent contradiction in an institution that aims to capture and recast a landscape in order so that it may be marketed to a consuming elite, that saves nature to sell it, and that exists “without reference to historical considerations” all the while attempting to absorb a Haida mythology into a more general mythology of relevance to all Canadians, much like Bill Reid’s *Spirit of Haida Gwaii* mentioned in the beginning of this paper. An important challenge is to redefine what is “rational” for state institutions, and to pay careful attention to the ways in which national parks, as governing institutions, attempt to regulate how we conceive of and interact with our physical environments, how we remember our histories, which histories we are not told, and our complicity as a society in these erasures.

The national parks system, with its emphasis on protecting geographically distinct areas, has not been interested in protecting areas that are of

ecological and cultural importance to First Nations, and has been unable to reconcile these multiple views of the landscape. In this sense, the establishment of a national park in South Moresby in 1987 was a political manoeuvre to avoid altogether the Haida and the aboriginal rights issue that they represented. More important, however, is how Parks Canada's involvement in the South Moresby area is an example of a bigger problem where an institution cannot act, and therefore turns an opportunity for change into an exercise in public relations.

What, then, does it mean to overcome colonialism? The first step is for the state not only to recognise that a plurality of traditions actually exists, but also to accept that the consequences of this context must mean shifting the relations of power. Day and Sadik warn that "Until [the government] does so it will continue to find itself in the self-contradictory situation of having to ignore or actively discourage dissenting voices that emanate from some of its partners in dialogue" (28). Given Canada's high moral tone on the international stage, one wonders why the "new era" of mutual recognition (liberal multiculturalism, the BC Treaty process, and co-management agreements are all examples of this) has so quickly failed to live up to its expectations. Are Gwaii Haanas' failures somehow inherent within the larger discourse of Canadian liberal multiculturalism? Indeed, "preserving a culture within a multicultural federation is one thing; offering up competing models

for the articulation of peoples with politics and economies is quite another” (Day and Sadik 2002, 26). Perhaps, as Day and Sadik suggest, the greatest threat that Aboriginal nationhood poses is the development of a critique of Canadian society that is applicable not only to First Nations living in Canada but also to mainstream citizens who are already fully integrated into the structures of liberal-democratic capitalism.

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